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AUTHOR Thomalla, Terri Groff; Dougherty, Victoria J.
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ABSTRACT

This report describes the performance of 6 Connecticut juvenile justice alternative sanction programs in 14 qualitative areas: community reintegration; outcomes and evaluation; assessment methods; risk factors; escalation of criminal activity; family involvement; community involvement; work ethic and vocational training; education and life skills; school enrollment; community service; supervision in the community; diversity of client needs; and use of current research. This program performance inventory was developed in response to Public Act 00-172, which requested a cost-benefit evaluation of programs serving juvenile offenders. Data were collected in early 2001 through interviews, document reviews, program observations, and focus groups. Programs had several delivery approaches in common, despite differences in clientele and program time-intensity, including a strong emphasis on life skills training and group interaction, frequent group recreation activities and group discussions, and individual service plans primarily emphasizing client behavioral goals. Challenges and services gaps the programs had in common included too few resources expended on reintegration and after-care once clients exited the program; little or no follow up to track progress; difficulty with family involvement; and lack of attention to clients' mental health needs. Three appendices present Statute Public Act 00-172 and revised criteria and charts of program statistics and critical issues. (SM)

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PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INVENTORY

SIX JUVENILE OFFENDER PROGRAMS

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Connecticut Policy and Economic Council
179 Allyn Street, Suite 308, Hartford, CT 06103

June 12, 2001

Terri Groff Thomalla – Program Manager
Victoria Dougherty – Principal Analyst

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or contact us directly

179 Allyn Street, Suite 308
Hartford, CT 06103

860-722-2490 (phone)
860-548-7363 (fax)

Terri Groff Thomalla
Project Manager
860-722-2492

Victoria J. Dougherty
Principal Analyst
860-722-2491

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INVENTORY

SIX JUVENILE OFFENDER PROGRAMS

Connecticut Policy and Economic Council
June 12, 2001

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The program performance inventory describes the performance of 6 juvenile justice alternative sanction programs in 14 qualitative areas. This inventory is the first product of a cost-benefit evaluation of juvenile alternative sanction programs in Connecticut. Future products of this evaluation will report the recidivism outcome rates and cost-effectiveness of the programs.

In 1995, the Connecticut General Assembly enacted Public Act 95-225, creating a statewide alternative sanctions system for juvenile offenders. In this report, six of these juvenile alternative sanction programs in the Hartford and New Haven area are evaluated. These six programs are the Gateway program in Hartford, the Dixwell House Girls Gateway program in New Haven, the North American Family Institute's Outreach and Monitoring program in Hartford, the Choice Outreach and Tracking program in Hartford, the Juvenile Supervision and Reporting Center in Hartford and the Cliff House School for sex offenders in Meriden.

Purpose of the Program Performance Inventory:

- To respond to the legislators' request for an inventory of juvenile justice programs based on certain qualitative areas.
- To provide background information to the recidivism outcome and cost-benefit components of the evaluation (i.e. insight into what the contract dollar buys).
- To provide comparative program information to Court Support Services Division (CSSD) staff, judges, probation officers and Department of Children and Families (DCF) staff on the programs' operations.
- To provide program providers with a tool for internal evaluation, external networking and soliciting funding sources.

The chapters of the inventory can be read as distinct pieces by different audiences. Individuals interested in broader policy issues pertaining to the spectrum of juvenile alternative sanction programs will most likely find Chapters II and IV to be of the most interest. For individuals interested in learning more about specific programs, Chapter III will provide the most value.

Background:

This program performance inventory was developed in response to PA 00-172, which requested a cost-benefit evaluation of programs serving juvenile offenders. In addition to a determination of cost-effectiveness in reducing recidivism, the Act asked that the Connecticut Policy Economic Council (CPEC) analyze the extent to which each program satisfies twelve qualitative criteria. The project's formal Advisory Board agreed to expand the criteria to fourteen areas to collect additional information. The program inventory describes the performance of the 6 programs in these 14 areas.

Methodology:

CPEC staff collected the information for this program inventory between February and May of 2001 through on-site staff interviews, document reviews and program observations. Focus groups were also conducted with probation and parole officers to solicit feedback on their experiences with these programs.

Readers should maintain awareness of the differences in program intent when reading this report. The six programs described in the report reflect the spectrum of clients served (low to high risk). CSSD and DCF purposefully fund a variety of program types to cover a range of client needs, in terms of intensity, type and length of intervention required. Therefore, the programs described in this report naturally vary on the extent to which they carry out some of the functions specified in the program inventory component of the statute.

Common Approaches:

Several delivery approaches were common across the programs, despite the differences in the risk-level of the clients served and the time-intensity of the programs:

- A strong emphasis on life skills training and group interactions;
- Frequent group recreation activities and group discussions;
- Individual service plans primarily consisting of client behavioral goals; and
- Using point and level systems, determining client rewards and sanctions, to promote client accountability.

Challenges:

Several challenges and service gaps also appeared to be common across the 6 programs:

- Few resources are expended on reintegration and after-care once the client exits the program;
- Little or no follow-up is conducted to track client progress after program exit;
- Program success is measured primarily by utilization, incident rates and discharge statistics;
- Family involvement is difficult;
- Vocational training is primarily limited to community service experiences; and
- Most of the programs are not designed to address the mental health needs of their clients and encounter difficulties in finding available places for referrals

The gaps in these areas are due more to contract limitations, policy decisions, and the limits on judicial authority than they are on individual program failings. For example, while all of the programs have attempted to involve families in the clients' programming, they are challenged by the inability to mandate parent participation in any services.

In the after-care area, the programs face limited resources and limited authority to enforce client participation in recommended services. However, all of the program staff interviewed indicated that after-care is critical to maintaining client progress after program exit.

Most of the programs are not contracted to provide vocational training. However, they are contracted to provide job-related services and to facilitate job placements. Most of the programs fulfill these requirements by conducting job preparedness groups and linking clients to summer employment programs. The provision of job-related skills, especially for juveniles approaching age 16, might warrant further attention in planning crime-deterrent programming.

With regard to the lack of mental health services, the programs are primarily funded to hire case management staff, not clinical staff. With the exception of the Cliff House School, these programs are not designed to be clinical or treatment programs. They are designed to rehabilitate clients primarily through the promotion of pro-social alternatives to crime, lessons in life skills and fostering accountability and responsibility through behavior management techniques. The programs largely rely on external sources to address other issues, such as substance abuse and mental health disorders. The program staff and the probation and parole officers interviewed indicated a gap between the availability of mental health treatment slots for referrals and the level of need for these slots. Several respondents suggested a need for incorporating this treatment capacity into the programs.

These areas appear to warrant further attention in evaluating the extent to which the programs meet the specified criteria and in considering their ability to prevent re-offense. Individual program performance in each of these areas, as well as the other areas specified in the statute, are addressed in greater detail in the inventory report.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The following document presents an inventory of the performance of 6 juvenile justice programs in 14 qualitative areas. This inventory is the first product of a cost-benefit evaluation of juvenile alternative sanction programs in Connecticut. Future products of this evaluation will report the recidivism outcome rates and cost-effectiveness of the programs described in this inventory.

Programs Under Study:

In 1995, the Connecticut General Assembly enacted Public Act 95-225, creating a statewide alternative sanctions system for juvenile offenders. The Court Support Services Division (CSSD) of the Judicial Branch and the Department of Children and Families (DCF) share responsibility for funding and overseeing these programs around the State. Currently, CSSD contracts with 69 juvenile alternative sanction programs, operating at 100 sites, representing 13 types of programs. The Department of Children and Families (DCF) manages or contracts with 11 programs that specifically serve juvenile delinquents. In fiscal year 2000, programs operated by CSSD served 2,626 adjudicated juveniles; programs operated by DCF served 1,227 adjudicated juveniles.

In this report, six juvenile alternative sanction programs in the Hartford and New Haven area are evaluated. These six programs were chosen to represent the spectrum of clients served (low to high risk); programs funded by both CSSD and DCF; and residential & non-residential services. Another criteria for selection was that the programs had been in operation since at least January 1997. Additionally, these 6 programs were chosen based on proximity to Hartford. Programs in other regions of the state and in non-urban areas will be included in phase 2 of this study.

The 6 programs evaluated in this report, categorized below by program type, are:
(Organizations in parenthesis indicate funding source)

1. **Gateway programs** - designed to serve entry-level juveniles; Non-residential.
   a. Gateway (Female), New Haven, Dixwell Community House (CSSD)
   b. Gateway (General), Hartford, Community Renewal Team (CSSD)

2. **Intensive Outreach and Monitoring/Tracking** - designed to serve moderate to high-risk; Non-residential.
   a. Outreach and Monitoring, Hartford, NAFI (CSSD)
   b. Outreach and Tracking, Hartford, Catholic Family Services (DCF)

3. **Juvenile Supervision and Reporting Centers (JSRCs) & Residential DCF Placements** – highest risk; Residential or more time-intensive placements.
   a. JSRC, Hartford, Community Solutions (CSSD)
   b. Cliff House School, Meriden, Male Sex Offender Program (DCF)

Purpose of the Program Performance Inventory:

The program performance inventory has several purposes.

1. To provide Connecticut State legislators with the information requested by statute on these State-funded programs.

2. To provide background to the recidivism outcome and cost-benefit study components.

3. To provide comparative program information to CSSD staff, judges, probation officers and DCF staff on the programs' operations.

4. To provide program providers with a tool for internal evaluation, networking and soliciting funding sources.

It is important to understand the services offered by the programs and differences in program operations and staffing in order to effectively compare the outcomes, costs and benefits of the different programs. This program performance inventory is intended to provide context to the outcome and cost-benefit results, to be released later this year, by providing greater insight into what the contract dollar buys.

The chapters in the following document can be read as distinct pieces by different audiences:

> Individuals interested in broader policy issues pertaining to the spectrum of juvenile alternative sanction programs will most likely find Chapter II (Summary Analysis of Program Performance) and Chapter IV (Summary Comments from Probation and Parole Officers) to be of the most interest. Chapter II provides an overview of how the programs in general perform in the 14 specified areas. Chapter IV summarizes input from probation and parole officers regarding the benefits and drawbacks of the programs overall.
>
> For individuals interested in learning about the services provided by, and performance of, a particular program, Chapter III (Program Profiles) describes the services and performance of each individual program.

Background to the Study:

In June 2000, the Connecticut General Assembly enacted PA 00-172, requesting a cost-benefit evaluation of programs serving juvenile offenders to determine their cost-effectiveness in reducing recidivism. PA 00-172 authorized the Connecticut Policy and Economic Council (CPEC) to conduct this evaluation. In addition to evaluating the programs' success in reducing recidivism and their cost-effectiveness in achieving these outcomes, the Act requested that CPEC evaluate the extent to which each program meets 12 qualitative criteria, primarily pertaining to the programs' services. At the March 2001 Advisory Board meeting, the board agreed to slightly revise and expand the criteria to collect information more pertinent to Connecticut's juvenile justice programs. The statute governing this study as well as the revised list of 14 criteria, used as the basis for this document, can be found in Appendix A.

To evaluate program performance in these 14 areas, the programs' recidivism outcomes and program cost-effectiveness, CPEC divided the cost-benefit evaluation into two phases:

1. In phase 1, CPEC is evaluating the program performance, recidivism outcomes and cost-effectiveness achieved by a six-program sample.
2. In phase two, CPEC will replicate the methodology used in phase 1 to evaluate the program performance, recidivism outcomes and cost effectiveness of a larger sample of programs statewide.

The following report documents the results of the first part of phase 1 -- the evaluation of program performance by the six-program sample.

Methodology:

CPEC staff collected the information for this program inventory between February and May of 2001. The staff conducted at least two visits to each of the six programs over this time period.

The CPEC staff conducted interviews with staff from each program using an internally developed interview guide. Questions covered staffing, client statistics, basic finances, intake, assessment, service offerings, recreation, restitution, client compliance, rewards/punishments, termination, follow-up and evaluation methods. The interview guide is available upon request from CPEC.

The interview questions primarily pertained to current program operations, as the goal of this inventory is to describe the programs as they operate today. However, CPEC staff also asked questions pertaining to program operations in Fiscal Year (FY) 1998, specifically with regard to staffing, client statistics and significant service differences. This information will be used as background to the analysis of recidivism outcomes of the clients who participated in the programs in FY 1998.

CPEC staff reviewed the FY 1998 and current contracts for each of the six programs and numerous other documents to supplement the information provided through staff interviews. Documents reviewed include: program brochures; policy and procedural manuals; financial reports; intake and assessment tools; service plan documents; curriculum guides and planning tools; outreach materials; program goals/mission statements; and any evaluation reports

Where possible, CPEC staff tried to observe the programs in operation. Staff also accompanied case managers from each of the two outreach and tracking/monitoring programs on school and home visits.

CPEC conducted focus groups with probation and parole officers to solicit their feedback on the representation of each program in a draft version of the inventory based on their experiences with the programs. The probation officers are employees of CSSD and have responsibility for clients enrolled in the CSSD programs. The parole officers are employed by DCF's juvenile justice division and are responsible for clients enrolled in the DCF programs. The input of the focus groups has been added to each program profile, to the synopsis section where appropriate, and in a closing summary comments section on more systemic issues.

Readers should maintain awareness of the differences in program intent when reading this report. The six programs described in this report reflect the spectrum of clients served (low to high risk). CSSD and DCF purposefully fund a variety program types to cover a range of client needs. Therefore, the programs described in this report naturally vary on the extent to which they carry out some of the functions specified in the program inventory component of the statute.

II. Summary Analysis of Program Performance in 14 Areas

1. **Maximizes the reintegration of the juvenile offender into the community upon release from the program**

The programs' reintegration strategies primarily consist of linking clients to community services prior to program exit, providing life skills trainings during the program, and using point and level systems to phase the clients into more unstructured community time as they approach discharge. All six programs include recommendations for after-care in their client discharge plans. The extent of the programs' efforts to promote client participation in the services varies.

For the most part, the programs do not provide any formal after-care or follow-up services with the clients after program exit. While all of the staff interviewed emphasized the importance of after-care in maintaining client success, most indicated that they are too constrained by their resources to dedicate staff time to this non-contracted service. Their ability to ensure after-care is also constrained by the limits on their authority over clients after discharge. However, in some cases, the clients come back to the programs voluntarily, to chat informally with program staff or seek advice.

By virtue of their working within-the-community approach, the two outreach and tracking /monitoring programs, Choice and NAFI, are more able to emphasize community reintegration from the start. Both programs rely on community agencies to provide some of the clients' programming, which they try to utilize for re-integration. The caseworkers encourage clients to continue using the services after exiting the program. Client participation in community-based activities appears to be more of a requirement at Choice than NAFI. The enforcement of this requirement is somewhat eased by the availability of slots for Choice clients in other programs run by Catholic Family Services, its parent agency, and in vocational training programs operated by South End Community Services, which is funded in part by DCF. Of the four site-based programs, the JSRC seemed to place the greatest emphasis on linking clients to local community programs prior to exit to encourage post-program participation.

Probation & Parole Input:

According to the probation and parole officers (POs) interviewed, the programs' involvement in making and facilitating after-care recommendations varies a great deal. While the 2 Gateway programs and the Cliff House School typically do not facilitate after-care recommendations, the other three programs use linkages to community resources prior to a client's program exit as their main after-care strategy. The officers also indicated that they frequently see past Choice and JSRC clients visiting the programs. Both programs have open-door policies, encouraging past clients to drop-in to the program any time.

2. **Is outcome-based and evaluates its success in achieving desired outcomes**

The programs vary in their definitions of successful vs. unsuccessful discharges. Most of the programs consider a termination a success if a client terminates from the program at the time that the client was originally supposed to terminate, rather than being discharged due to re-arrest or program violations. A couple of the programs also specify that they only count a discharge as a success if the client is not "graduated" to a more intensive program upon termination and if the client is stabilized upon exit. This is more restrictive than the CSSD's definition of success, which indicates that even if a client is moved to a more intensive program, they might be considered a successful discharge, as long as they were not re-arrested or did not commit a program violation warranting discharge.

When asked about their program goals, most of the respondents discussed client success in areas such as program compliance, reintegration into the community, reduction of recidivism and community safety. While all of the programs assess goal achievement by individual clients, none of the programs, except for JSRC and Choice, analyze client progress during the program in the aggregate. The Choice and JSRC programs measure aggregate progress in areas such as school attendance and abstention from substances. All of the programs track utilization rates, incident occurrences, complaints and discharge rates to satisfy funding source reporting requirements. Beyond this tracking, most of the programs do not formally evaluate their program success. None of the programs currently measure client success after program exit. The NAFI program has started to collect post-program client data, but has not yet begun analysis of it.

3. Includes assessment methods at intake to determine the interventions most likely to change behaviors and norms of the individual clients

The two more time-intensive programs, which serve higher risk offenders, the JSRC and Cliff House School, conduct in-depth client assessments while the other 4 programs primarily utilize the information that they receive from the probation or parole departments. This information typically includes a pre-dispositional study (PDS) and may include a psychological evaluation. The Girls Gateway program also conducts a needs and strengths assessment of each client. In the Choice program, the clients are coming from a residential placement and have therefore usually already been assessed at the program level.

All 6 programs use assessment and intake information to develop individual client service plans, enumerating specific client goals. Client goals typically involve actions or behaviors expected of the client, such as attending school. With the exception of the Cliff House School, the goals address presenting behaviors rather than the clinical issues which may underlie the behaviors. Several programs indicated that they do not address clinical issues as they are not equipped nor are they contractually bound to do so. The programs primarily employ case managers not clinicians.

4. Addresses various client risk factors, which may contribute to the client's delinquent behavior, such as;

a. Substance Abuse

Substance abuse as a precursor to illegal activity is addressed in a variety of ways. While all of the programs provide some substance abuse education to the clients, they do not formally provide substance abuse counseling on a routine basis, with the exception of the JSRC program.

The two Gateway programs and the NAFI Outreach and Monitoring program do not screen for drug use. Rather, if a client is suspected of being under the influence, probation is called to conduct a urinalysis. In the two Gateway programs, probation may then decide to revoke the client from the program for non-compliance. The NAFI program will most likely refer clients with indicated drug abuse issues to external agencies for counseling.

The Choice and JSRC programs conduct random drug tests. If tests are positive, Choice clients are referred to external agencies for treatment and are informally counseled during client visits. JSRC clients who have demonstrated difficulty in controlling their substance use are required to participate in internal substance abuse group counseling sessions twice a week and weekly psycho-educational substance abuse sessions. The JSRC clients in need of more intensive treatment are referred out, most frequently to the Hispanic Health Council and Mt. Sinai Hospital.

According to staff, substance abuse is not a common problem with Cliff House clients. For those with an identified need, general substance abuse prevention and counseling is incorporated into individual therapy sessions.

The staff of the programs reported that there are usually enough slots at external agencies to meet their referral needs for substance abuse counseling. However, according to one of the Hartford programs, referring clients with marijuana problems is often far more difficult than other substance addictions because insurance companies do not recognize cannabis as an addictive substance, and thus will often not pay for drug treatment.

Probation & Parole Input:

The probation and parole officers stated that slots for substance abuse treatment at community agencies are typically available, however getting clients to follow through on the referrals can be challenging. For this reason, one PO emphasized that the JSRC's in-house provision of substance abuse treatment is particularly beneficial. Additionally, one of the New Haven probation officers expressed concern regarding the quality of the services available through local referrals.

b. Experiences of physical, emotional or sexual abuse

Many of the juveniles going through the justice system are victims of abuse. All of the programs indicated that should new situations of abuse arise, they would immediately make a report to the DCF Care-line. In addition, all of the programs with the exception of Cliff House make referrals to external counseling providers. Because of the therapeutic nature of the Cliff House program they address abuse experiences internally through the program.

c. Negative peer influences

The programs all recognize the importance of positive peer influence and pro-social activities in reducing recidivism. Emphasis is placed on accepting personal responsibility for one's actions as well as understanding the impact of teasing and peer influences. In addition to addressing the topics in life skills and one-on-one sessions, all of the programs incorporate socially acceptable activities into their programming. For example, Choice mandates that all clients be involved in after school activities, such as sports leagues, jobs or community programs. Dixwell, NAFI, and the JSRC identify client talents and interests and then try to match the clients to appropriate neighborhood organizations such as community choirs and Fire Explorers. The hope is that when the kids leave the program they will remain engaged in the structured activities. The Gateway and NAFI programs also try to enforce "no contact" orders issued by the court that mandate that clients do not interact with other specified persons.

d. Learning disabilities or attention deficit issues

Many if not most of the clients in these programs are well behind age appropriate education levels, some due to learning disabilities or attention deficit disorders. While the Cliff House program uses its staff psychiatrist to routinely monitor learning disabilities and attention deficit disorders, adjusting treatment as necessary, the other non-clinical programs must take different approaches. The programs typically advocate on behalf of the clients in ensuring the schools address their learning needs, through IEPs (Individual Education Plans) and by providing special/alternative education services. Most complement these efforts during programming hours by spending more individual time with the clients in a tutoring or mentoring capacity. The NAFI and JSRC programs also monitor the clients' medication intake. If they detect medication problems, they may work with probation to have the clients reassessed and dosages reviewed.

e. Mental health issues

All of the CSSD funded programs, especially the Gateways, readily admit that they are not clinical programs and are not equipped to service the needs of those with significant mental health issues. Probation too is aware of the program constraints and typically does not refer clients with serious mental health needs to these non-clinical programs. For clients with an indicated need for mental health counseling, the programs refer clients to external agencies such as the Clifford Beers Clinic, the Institute of Living, Mt. Sinai and the Woodstock Agency to supplement their on-site programming. NAFI also indicated that if they believe a client to be at risk they place the client on a "crisis prevention plan", increasing supervision to daily visits.

As a clinical program, the Cliff House attempts to address the mental health needs of its clients on-site. In addition to individual and group counseling by staff clinicians, a psychiatrist conducts monthly reviews of case files to ensure that treatment and medications are appropriate.

Several programs cited difficulty in identifying viable mental health treatment slots at external agencies. Placement difficulties range from long waiting lists to providers not accepting a client's insurance. Especially difficult to find are intensive mental health and partial-hospital care settings.

Probation and Parole Input:

The probation and parole officers confirmed that with the exception of the Cliff House School, the programs typically try to utilize outside sources for mental health counseling, rather than address these needs internally. The probation officers indicated that there is a significant lack of mental health slots available at outside agencies. According to these officers, community programs in the Hartford area providing mental health services to the juvenile justice population are typically full, have waiting lists, require the client to be DCF committed or restrict the insurance coverage they will accept. The parole officers did not express similar concerns regarding the availability of mental health services for their clients.

Another barrier to mental health services, raised by the probation officers, is that an increasing number of providers require the parents to be present for the child to attend counseling. If the program staff or probation officers cannot compel the parents to attend the counseling with the client, the referral will not materialize into actual service delivery.

Several probation officers emphasized the need for mental health services in the programs. One officer estimated that half of the probation clients are court-ordered to receive mental health counseling, but if the client does not have insurance or there are no counseling slots available, the court order cannot be implemented. Several of the probation officers suggested that based on the lack of available slots and the need for mental health services, the court system should consider adding clinical staff to the programs, on at least a part-time basis. One PO suggested that a clinician could float between several of the alternative sanction programs.

f. Acceptance of antisocial activity as norm/criminal thinking

Aside from discussing both individually and in group settings why their offending behaviors are socially unacceptable, the programs do not use any common approaches to address antisocial and criminal thinking.

- Gateway emphasizes the need to engage in pro-social activities and helps clients identify triggers to negative behavior.
- Dixwell uses reality-based exercises, such as prison visits and budgeting simulations, to help the girls recognize the long-term effects of having criminal records.
- NAFI teaches the clients about empathy and personal responsibility.
- Choice uses mentoring, personal relationships between the staff and client and trust to convince kids not to engage in criminal activity.
- JSRC uses the YLSI (Youth Level of Service Case Management Inventory) to score clients on their level of criminal thinking. They then use the scores to programmatically separate clients by risk level. The JSRC supplements this technique with prison visits.
- Cliff House conducts five clinical sessions per week in which the inappropriateness of sex offending behavior is discussed.

5. Provides services, which are designed to prevent escalation in criminal activity

All of the programs use the promotion of pro-social activities, anger management training and reward and sanction systems as strategies to prevent future occurrence or escalation of offending behavior. Other strategies used include life skills trainings, empathy development and promoting parental vigilance. The Gateway and JSRC programs expose the clients to portrayals of adult prison life, through field trips and videos as a prevention strategy. Some programs also target prevention efforts to address underlying issues specific to their client population. For example, the Dixwell Girls Gateway program emphasizes self-esteem building as a prevention strategy while the Cliff House School uses clinical treatment strategies to address each client's cycle of offense.

6. Involves the family in the client's rehabilitation program

The staff of all of the programs attempt regular contact with the parents through phone and site visits. Of the non-residential programs, the two outreach and tracking/monitoring programs seem to make the greatest effort to work with the families through frequent home visits and attempts to link families to other services as needed. Both of these programs indicated that parental involvement is often difficult. In some cases, though, parents utilize the caseworkers for ongoing support and advice.

All of the programs attempt to involve the clients' families in the programming, despite the challenge it poses. The Gateway programs and the Choice program do not conduct routine meetings for parents, whereas the other 3 programs do. Parents reportedly rarely attend these meetings unless their children are in a residential program at the site, as in Cliff House and the JSRC. The JSRC clients cannot earn furloughs or days off unless there is parental involvement. Due to this incentive, most JSRC clients are able to compel their families to participate in family programming.

Probation and Parole Input:

The Probation Officers expressed a great deal of frustration when discussing family involvement in the juvenile justice programs. They emphasized the need for the families to be more involved in the clients' programming yet they recognize the limitations the programs face in pushing parent involvement. The POs spoke of the need for the court system to hold parents accountable, at least in part, for the actions of their children. According to the POs, if the courts could do more to require parent involvement, the probation officers and the program staff could do more to address critical family issues, impacting the child's outcomes. Several of the POs suggested creating a bridge between the juvenile and adult systems through which parents could be held in violation of a court order for not complying with orders such as ensuring school attendance or attending family counseling.

The parole officers did not raise the same frustrations regarding family involvement, although they did indicate some challenges the programs face in getting the parents to comply with family counseling.

7. Involves community members such as employers, relatives, teachers, clergy and community mentors in the client's programming to the greatest extent possible

The programs do not appear to regularly work with community members, aside from school personnel. The NAFI and Choice outreach and tracking programs indicated that they attempt to work with community members if they are very involved in a client's life. In addition, the Choice program tries to involve the clients' peers in group activities. The JSRC is the only program of the six to include a formal mentoring component. The mentors are carefully recruited and screened, as operating a mentoring program for juvenile justice clients requires significant oversight.

8. Promotes work ethic, social skills necessary to securing and maintaining a job, vocational training and job placement assistance where age appropriate

While all of the programs provide some social skills training which is a necessary component of job readiness for these juveniles, most of the programs do not provide any substantial work skills training. Vocational training is largely provided through community service activities, such as farm and hospital work and through program chores. The Cliff House School also provides woodworking and cooking training through its on-site school.

Several of the programs teach job seeking skills, such as how to conduct interviews and complete applications as part of their group activities. The programs primarily cover work ethic issues through community service activities and life skills training. Except for the Cliff House School, which is a 24-hour secure facility, the programs all assist clients with job placements in summer employment programs, primarily by helping clients to obtain and complete applications. The Choice program places a heavy emphasis on job placement year-round and reports that close to 95% of its age appropriate clients are in jobs.

9. Provides educational skills and competencies necessary for the juvenile offender to function effectively and positively in the community

At the residential programs, academic education is provided by on-site schools, under contracts with the Board of Education. In the non-residential programs, program staff check school attendance at the clients' home schools on a routine basis. The two outreach and tracking programs also regularly check on the student's behavioral and academic progress with school personnel. The programs report to offer tutoring to the students on an as-needed basis.

All of the programs offer "life skills" training on topics such as anger management, personal hygiene, parenting skills and balancing a checkbook. The Cliff House School, JSRC and the two Gateway programs conduct these group sessions at least once/week. The Choice program conducts groups every other week. The NAFI program only requires clients to attend 4 group meetings over the course of their program participation. Instead, the caseworkers cover life skills topics on a more individual basis, following an extensive packet of life skills topics.

10. Works with the school system to ensure offenders are appropriately enrolled and that their education needs are addressed

Those programs serving the lower risk offenders, Gateway, Dixwell and NAFI, tend not to have difficulties with school enrollment except in instances of expulsion. For those clients the programs work in conjunction with probation and utilize their relationships with school officials to enroll the clients at a different school or to secure homebound tutoring services.

Most often the enrollment challenges come for juveniles returning to school after an extended absence due to residential placement or day-program involvement like at the JSRC. These kids are often perceived as troublemakers that the schools don't want back. Choice and JSRC have established strong relationships with the Hartford School District's Board of Education, especially in the Department of Alternative Education to help facilitate enrollment. In order to ensure proper placement and that Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are being met, staff routinely attend Pupil-Parent-Teacher (PPT) and IEP meetings to advocate for the client.

Both the Choice and JSRC staff emphasized how much reintegration has improved under the new leadership in Hartford's Alternative Education department. Since the arrival of Matt George, great strides have been made with the creation of transitional educational programs. Previously, the juvenile justice programs were challenged with the administrative burden of working with each school individually: transferring paperwork and negotiating with numerous school personnel to enroll each client. Through the Pilot Reintegration Education Program (PREP) and the Hartford Alternative Learning Opportunities (HALO) program, the JSRC and Choice programs now have a central location to which they can refer clients transitioning back into Hartford public schools for assessment and placement.

Despite the great strides however, both programs mentioned barriers they still encounter around enrollment issues. In particular the JSRC indicated that managing the timing of a client's program exit with an appropriate entry date for school can be difficult. The Choice program stated that there are still some glitches in transitioning special education students through the HALO program. For non-HALO clients (those who attended a residential placement other than Long Lane), the Choice staff still encounter difficulties with the Hartford public schools accepting the students' enrollment.

Probation and Parole Input:

The probation and parole officers indicated that the program staff primarily handle the enrollment of clients in the schools, with the exception of the Cliff House program.

Both the probation and parole officers expressed frustration with the lack of supervision and responsibility the schools take for their clients once they are enrolled. According to both focus groups, the larger city schools often let the probation and parole students routinely skip school or leave early without attempting to intervene. Additionally, the probation officers expressed frustration with the schools' reliance on them and on the program staff as a substitution for school intervention. For example, rather than provide in-school suspension for a student a school knows is enrolled in a juvenile justice program, the school may call the program or probation staff and ask them to come get the student. The POs also said that some schools take the opposite tack of asking the officers to not come to the school during the day to see students, as it is disruptive.

An additional concern expressed by the probation officers is a tendency of some schools to stigmatize probation clients and to expel them more often than other students because of their history. The POs indicated a need for more consistent criteria in the schools' handling of juvenile justice students.

11. Provides structured community service opportunities for the clients

All of the programs, except for the Cliff House School, offer community service activities for their clients. The Cliff House School is constrained in their ability to offer this activity due to limits on client outings within the local community. The NAFI, JSRC and Dixwell programs require community service of all clients, whether or not the court has required them to perform it. The Choice program uses community service as a consequence for negative program behavior. The types of community service activities offered by the programs include volunteering at soup kitchens, hospitals, nursing homes and area farms.

12. Ensures structured supervision of the clients in the community to prevent delinquent activity while the client is a program participant

The programs all attempt to supervise the clients in the community through ongoing monitoring when the clients are off-site, primarily through phone calls. All of the programs except for JSRC's residential component and the Cliff House School, which are 24-hour programs, require clients to call into the programs on an almost daily basis. With the exception of Dixwell Girls Gateway program, the programs use a supervision ratio of between 3 and 5 clients per staff member during group outings. Unless volunteers are available, the Dixwell program must use a ratio of 10 clients to 1 staff, as the program coordinator is the only staff member.

13. Recognizes and addresses the diversity of individual client needs within the program

All of the programs use individual service plans to focus on the specific issues that each client needs to address. In the outreach and tracking/monitoring programs most of the program experience is individualized. In the JSRC, Dixwell Gateway, and CRT-Gateway programs the programming is more geared towards serving all of the clients as a group. However, the JSRC attempts to address client specific issues by assigning the clients to specialized groups and through frequent one-on-one case management. The Cliff House School also uses specialized groups to address individual client needs. In addition, the Cliff House provides individual counseling to the clients on a routine basis.

14. Keeps abreast of and utilizes current research on effective intervention strategies for the juvenile delinquent population

With the exception of Dixwell Girls Gateway program whose sole staff member is stretched thin by other program responsibilities, all of the programs indicated that a great deal of attention is placed on training and staying current with proven strategies in dealing with the juvenile offender population. To do this staff attend conferences, subscribe to periodicals, join professional organizations and participate in training. Many of the nonprofit parent agencies also provide training.

Training is not limited to just juvenile justice related topics, but also includes topics like healthy sexuality, (dispensing) medication certification, CPR/First Aide and knowing proper boundaries. CSSD has arranged for the program staff to be eligible for any Employee Training Programs, Inc. (ETP) sessions, which are regularly held for probation officers. CSSD also circulates relevant information to the programs from time to time, especially on gender specific programming issues.

III. Program Profiles

Gateway Offender Program, Hartford, Community Renewal Team (CRT)

Program Model:

The Gateway program was created as a safe, supervised, after school alternative to beyond control, truant youth and low risk adjudicated offenders who are at-risk for future criminal activity. Programming and group sessions are geared towards minimizing risky activities through the creation of structured interactions with adults. Key program concepts include teaching the kids responsibility and accountability. Programming goals include reducing at risk behavior and providing an opportunity for clients to share situations and ask questions in a non-threatening environment.

Clients Served:

The program was developed for and primarily serves beyond control youth and those at the entry point (gateway) into a criminal lifestyle. According to the staff, the clients referred to the program are generally low risk, first time or very young offenders. Due to the creation of gender specific programs by other juvenile justice providers in recent months, the CRT Gateway program has by default become a boys only facility.

Time Spent in Program:

Clients generally spend between 3 and 6 months in the program.

Clients are broken into two groups each of whom must attend three days per week. Programming runs weekdays from 4 pm – 6pm and Saturday from 9 am – 12pm. In addition to attending programming all clients are required to call-in to the program on their off days.

If a client is suspended from school, Gateway expects the client to come to the program instead. During school hours the child is expected to do the homework the case managers picks up for him at school. If no homework is available, the program has a variety of curricula on which the client can work.

Staffing:

In addition to the program coordinator, the Gateway program regularly employs three full time case managers.

Basic Finances:

Currently 100 percent of CRT-Gateway's funding comes from CSSD. The FY 2001 budget of $208,972 is used to support programming for 20 court referred and 18 Family with Service Needs (FWSN) clients. The three largest budget expenditures are personnel, supplies (programming materials, including reading and academic materials and videos for group sessions) and contractual services. The daily cost of serving a client is $15.07.[1]

Services:

During their time at the program each client participates in structured recreation, life skills training and group enrichment programs. The clients also meet individually with a case manager on a monthly or as-needed basis to discuss progress on program goals and any infractions or violations. In addition, program staff conduct monthly attendance and progress checks with the students' schools.

Recreation activities involve peer interaction, such as table tennis and outdoor sports. In addition to being a stress reliever, the recreation time is intended as a mechanism to teach sharing, manners and positive peer interaction and to offer healthy recreational alternatives to crime. The life skills and group enrichment sessions are also designed to teach positive peer interaction. Group sessions incorporate a variety of formats from videos to guest speakers to staff led sharing. Topics covered include checkbook balancing, proper hygiene and anger and stress control.

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[1] Average daily cost for each program is calculated by dividing the program's total budget for the most recent fiscal year by 365 days and by the number of clients served in the program year. The number of hours and days in which clients are served varies by programs. These variations will be considered in the cost-benefit analysis.

Gateway Offender Program, Hartford, Community Renewal Team (CRT)

1. Maximizes the reintegration of the juvenile offender into the community upon release from the program

Beginning at intake, caseworkers spend one-on-one and group time with the clients discussing socially acceptable behavior and the clients' specific issues to help the client reintegrate into the community. Prior to discharge CRT staff conduct a one-on-one discharge interview with the client to review personal goals and objectives, to recommend future services needed by the client and to determine the client's reaction to the intervention.

After Care:

The Gateway program makes recommendations to probation about client needs for subsequent intervention in their written discharge plan. These suggestions are shared informally with the client prior to discharge. The program provides no direct after-care services.

2. Is outcome-based and evaluates its success in achieving desired outcomes

When asked their program goals, the Gateway staff responded that their goals are to get the clients as compliant to the program as possible and to help them "get along in life". Client goals are set within one week of admittance, reviewed monthly and discussed in a discharge meeting with the client. Client goal achievement is not aggregated to measure overall program success. Staff and program goals are reviewed through an audit conducted by Community Renewal Team. Annual audits encompass everything from van maintenance to adhering to the policy manual. Aside from the CSSD required monthly and quarterly utilization reports, the program does not produce any evaluation or progress reports.

Definition of Successful vs. Unsuccessful Discharges:

Gateway staff consider a program discharge to be successful if the client stayed in the program the length of their disposition and committed limited or no program violations. Unsuccessful completion occurs when a client commits a crime and is ultimately removed from the program or when the client is extremely non-compliant with program rules. In rare instances clients are terminated from the program for assaulting staff or other clients.

3. Includes assessment methods at intake to determine the interventions most likely to change behaviors and norms of the individual clients

The Gateway program does not conduct any formal client assessments, other than a substance abuse evaluation. Prior to admission a brief tour of the client's home is usually conducted to better understand a client's family dynamic. The program also conducts an informal reading exam to determine the client's literacy level. All other pertinent information is derived from the pre-dispositional study conducted by probation.

Within 7 days of admission, the program creates an individual service plan (ISP) for each client with goals based on a review of the assessment information received from the courts and the caseworker's home visit. The plan typically includes standard goals such as complying with program rules and client specific goals such as attending school, not using drugs and not engaging in the activity that brought the client into the program. The service plan only lists goals and associated objectives, rather than specific interventions. Subsequent reviews of program goals occur on a monthly basis.

4. **Addresses various client risk factors, which may contribute to the client's delinquent behavior, such as;**

a. Substance Abuse

If a client is suspected to be under the influence they are immediately sent home as both a punishment for inappropriate behavior and to minimize the negative influence the client would have on his peers. Clients are fully aware that their probation officer will be contacted and drug testing requested. It is then up to the probation department to revoke the client from the program for noncompliance should they choose. The Gateway program covers substance abuse prevention in group sessions. They do not provide substance abuse treatment directly or through referral.

b. Experiences of physical, emotional or sexual abuse

If for any reason Gateway suspects a case of abuse, probation is notified and a report is made to DCF's 'Care-line'. During group and individual sessions with the clients, program staff also emphasize the program's role as a "safe-haven" where clients should feel free and comfortable to discuss any problems they have, including their experiences with abusive situations.

c. Negative peer influences

The Gateway Program uses two types of tactics to address negative peer influences. First, in group sessions they address the importance of making positive decisions and selecting good role models. To compliment this effort they use "one on one" time with the client to reaffirm group sessions with personalized examples. In instances where the court is aware of negative peer associations, usually co-conspirators in a crime, it will issue a "No Contact" order that prohibits the client from interacting with those specified parties. The Gateway program works with the clients to ensure that the orders are followed but cites that with only six to seven hours per week it is difficult to track.

d. Learning disabilities or attention deficit issues

In order to best help those clients with learning or attention deficit issues, Gateway sets aside a learning room and allows additional time for those who need it to get after school tutoring and/or help with homework.

e. Mental Health Issues

According to the staff, because the Gateway program is intended to serve low-risk, entry-level offenders, juveniles with mental health needs are typically not referred to it. The program is not equipped to address mental health issues.

f. Acceptance of antisocial activity as norm/criminal thinking

The Gateway program recognizes the importance of identifying positive leisure activities as one way of reducing antisocial and criminal behavior. During both one-on-one and group sessions, heavy emphasis is placed on identifying socially acceptable behavior and learning how to minimize triggers to engaging in criminal activity.

5. Provides services which are designed to prevent escalation in criminal activity

The program attempts to reduce recidivism through structured supervision and group activities. In group sessions, all clients are given the opportunity to discuss current events, have candid conversations about pregnancy, planned parenthood, their crime (in general terms) and how their life is affected by the world around them. In particular, some of the group sessions are devoted to prevention videos and follow-up discussions such as the "Hard Time" video, which features life in maximum-security adult prisons.

6. Involves the family in the client's rehabilitation program

In an attempt to involve the family from the beginning, a home visit is usually conducted as part of the intake process. The meeting is used to emphasize the importance of parents establishing ground rules and to inform them that the program is a resource for them if there is a need for mediation. Until recently monthly family "group" sessions were held for Gateway parents. Due to sporadic attendance the programs were discontinued and information about the program and monthly activities are now sent to the parents in a newsletter. Currently little work is done with Gateway parents after the intake process and home visit. Interaction is generally limited to phone calls. Increased interaction comes primarily if notable problems occur with the client.

7. Involves community members, such as employers, relatives, teachers, clergy and community mentors in the client's programming to the greatest extent possible

The program staff does not routinely reach out to other community members involved with the client.

8. Promotes work ethic, social skills necessary to securing and maintaining a job, vocational training, and job placement assistance where age appropriate

Work ethic is covered periodically during group sessions. During this time attention is paid to learning the rules of the job, how to behave while dealing with the public and the manners required while working. These skills are then practiced during volunteer activities like serving food at the soup kitchen or working with the aged. Program staff also assist clients with completing job applications for the Summer Youth Employment Program.

9. Promotes educational skills and competencies necessary for the juvenile offender to function effectively and positively in the community

All program participants are expected to be enrolled in and regularly attend school with attendance monitored monthly. If a client is suspended, clients are expected to come to the program site and either complete homework picked up by a caseworker or review level appropriate educational materials housed at the facility.

Life Skills:

Life skills sessions are held twice a week and cover topics such as checkbook balancing, team building and how to identify triggers and reduce anger.

10. Works with the school system to ensure offenders are appropriately enrolled and that their education needs are addressed

The Gateway clients do not generally encounter school enrollment problems with the exception of those that are suspended or have had extreme behavioral problems. In those instances program staff, in conjunction with the families, will work with school officials including; guidance counselors, teachers and assistant principals to advocate on behalf of those that are doing well in the program.

Aside from monthly attendance checks, the program does not have strong relationships with the schools thus they do not get directly involved in issues related to proper placement and IEP fulfillment. Instead the program works through probation to assist them in any way necessary to facilitate meeting the clients' needs.

11. Provides structured community service opportunities for the clients

The Gateway program provides periodic (primarily weekend and summer) volunteer opportunities to help clients satisfy sentencing requirements. Group activities offered include volunteering at nursing homes and homeless shelters. The program also recognizes any activity done for the good of a school or nonprofit as part of their community service programming.

12. Ensures structured supervision in the community to prevent delinquent activity while the client is a program participant

As Gateway clients are low risk offenders living in the community they often go unsupervised except for periodic checks of school attendance and meetings with school personnel. When clients participate in group activities in the community, however, a supervision ratio of 1 to 5 is in place with restrictions on client interactions with passers by. On the days clients are not in the program, they are expected to call into the program.

13. Recognizes the diversity of local needs

Shortly following program admission an individual service plan is created for each client. These service plans primarily consist of client behavioral goals rather than treatments or interventions to be provided. The programming offered by the Gateway program is communal rather than individually based. Recreation and life skills activities are deliberately conducted on behalf of the entire group. However, client goals are periodically addressed with caseworkers on an individual basis.

14. Keeps abreast of and utilizes current research on effective intervention strategies for the juvenile delinquent population

The Gateway program keeps abreast of current juvenile justice topics in a variety of ways. All staff are required to participate in 40 hours of training annually. Training is provided both internally by the Community Renewal Team, Gateway's parent organization, and externally by other juvenile justice programs and community organizations. Topics vary from understanding proper boundaries with clients to healthy sexuality to improving public speaking skills. The program also subscribes to field related publications and email list-serves from organizations such as the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) and the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) to learn about the efforts of similar organizations in other states.

Training is incorporated into daily program activities in a variety of ways from having staff more effectively lead group meetings to utilizing new, more effective training materials and videos.

Probation Input:

The probation officers (POs) interviewed concurred with the above depiction of Gateway with the exception of the re-integration and after-care description. According to the POs, the Gateway program does not typically make specific after-care recommendations for clients. Discharge summaries usually state "whatever the court deems appropriate" for both successful and unsuccessful discharges. The POs acknowledged, however, that if the program did make specific after-care recommendations for successful discharges, there is not much the POs could do to implement the recommendations, since their authority over the clients will have ended.

A significant issue emphasized by the POs was the mix of clients enrolled in Gateway. Although the program is designed for first-time and young offenders, the clientele tends to represent a wide spectrum of age and risk levels, according to the officers interviewed. They indicated that the Gateway program is really designed for first-time offenders and FWSNs based on the types and frequency of activities offered. Several POs suggested that taking higher risk delinquents is a detriment to the program and the clients, as research indicates that higher risk clients often negatively influence lower risk clients.

The group acknowledged that the court system contributes to the inappropriate mix of clients by referring higher risk delinquents to Gateway. According to the POs, if they need slots for clients and Gateway has them, they will send them there even if they are not the right fit, in the absence of more appropriate choices. As one PO pointed out, the new risk assessment tool that CSSD is implementing will render the need for more programs geared to specific risk levels even greater.

Girls Gateway Program, New Haven, Dixwell Community House

Program Model:

The Dixwell's Girls' Gateway (DGG) program was designed to specifically address the needs of beyond control, truant and low risk adjudicated girls who are at-risk for future criminal activity. The Girls Gateway program is part of a series of gender-specific programs, which CSSD funds to recognize the needs of female offenders. Life skills and group activities revolve around the cultural and social needs of young girls. Emphasis is placed on developing assertiveness, pregnancy prevention, understanding personal and sexual responsibility, and learning strong communication skills, to be used especially with parents and boyfriends.

Clients Served:

Dixwell's target population is low-risk court-involved delinquent and Family with Service Needs (FWSN) girls between the ages of 12 and 16.

Time Spent in Program:

Clients generally spend between 3 and 6 months in the program. During that time Dixwell clients are expected to attend the program 3 hours/day, 5 days/week. Each girl is also expected to call the program coordinator each night at 8pm from home.

If a girl is suspended from school it is expected that she will come to the community center at the start of the day. Her first responsibility will be to complete her schoolwork. Subsequent tasks include assisting the Dixwell Community Center with any needs it might have. Chores vary from cleaning the facility to helping with after-school programming.

Staffing:

The staff at this program is limited to one full time program director. The program also has a part time volunteer and a contracted social worker that conducts intake assessments and some life skills sessions. The staffing situation proved problematic for the interviewers and should be considered a potential liability for Dixwell's funding agency, CSSD, for a number of reasons. First should there be a staff illness or vacancy the entire program would be in jeopardy. Secondly, any allegations made about staff or client actions would result in a "he said, she said" situation, with no one able to corroborate information. Lastly, it is difficult to supervise the clients during community outings with a 10:1 client to staff ratio.

Basic Finances:

Currently 100% of the Dixwell Girl's Gateway program is funded by CSSD. The FY 2001 budget for the program is $51,000 and has an average daily cost per client of $13.97, based on the 10-slot capacity. The program coordinator and the contract both state that despite the 10-slot cap, the program often enrolls as many as 12 clients. The Dixwell Community House also provides in-kind resources, including clerical support and account management valued at approximately $50,000. The largest costs of running the program include personnel, clinical support and mileage.

Services:

The DGG takes pride in offering a series of girl-specific activities that develop social skills, nurture assertiveness, create short and long-term goals, facilitate positive community interactions and teach a variety of topics that will be important for their survival and for the reduction of future criminal activity. Activities include structured recreation, life skills training, group and informal one-on-one counseling if necessary. Topics highlighted include better communication skills, personal responsibility, proper hygiene and more.

During all activities special attention is paid to the individual mental health needs of each client. Through both a clinical and program assessment, the program coordinator and social worker attempt to develop a customized treatment plan that addresses the behavior which resulted in program admission. Monthly review of the service plans recognizes goal achievement and helps identify changing issues in the girl's life, which left unchecked, could result in escalated problems.

Girls Gateway Program, New Haven, Dixwell Community House

1. Maximizes the reintegration of the juvenile offender into the community upon release from the program

While in the program heavy emphasis is placed on education, both in terms of completing high school and attending college. Field trips are taken to universities and technical colleges in an effort to spur career interests long after program intervention is complete.

Also, thirty days prior to program completion, a discharge plan is created for each girl to address more immediate needs. In addition to highlighting skill sets and program achievements, the plan is created as a method of linking the clients to other community resources, primarily through recommended referrals. Often this would include transferring a client's Dixwell Community House membership to a community center closer to the girl's home.

After Care:

Aside from a follow-up call within one month of discharge, nothing is done in the way of aftercare. In part this is a result of staffing and funding constraints, but also due to the policy that once a girl has completed her sentence no one has the right to interact with her regarding her program intervention.

2. Is outcome-based and evaluates it success in achieving desired outcomes

The program goals are for the clients to not re-offend and to leave the program with the skills and knowledge to not return to court. While goal achievement by each client is measured, currently nothing is done to measure aggregate outcomes for the program.

Definition of Successful vs. Unsuccessful Discharges:

According to the program about 90% of clients complete the Girls Gateway program successfully; meaning that they did not recommit an offense while enrolled, and they were compliant with program rules. Those that are unsuccessful were those who committed another offense while enrolled in the program or were revoked by probation for other reasons, including drug use and curfew violations.

3. Includes assessment methods at intake to determine the interventions most likely to change behaviors and norms of the individual clients

The DGG program attempts to use all assessments made available from the courts. Traditionally this is limited to a pre-dispositional study (PDS) as these girls are generally first-time and low-risk offenders. In addition, the program intake process requires that each girl be assessed by the program coordinator to rank critical issues in the client's life and be evaluated by a social worker, if necessary, to ascertain the girl's mental health needs. All information is then used to create a customized service plan for the client.

Individual service plans are created from information derived from the intake assessments and court documents. The plans consist of program goals, which generally include issues such as going to school, but also attempt to focus on the underlying issues. Goal cycles can be as short as one week or for the duration of the program.

4. Addresses various client risk factors, which may contribute to the client's delinquent behavior such as;

a. Substance abuse

This program was not designed to serve clients with substance abuse issues. Aside from general substance abuse prevention covered during group sessions the program does not generally deal with the issue. Those with known addictions are typically not referred to the Dixwell program, but to a clinical program equipped to deal with abuse behaviors. If a client develops a substance abuse problem while in the program, the probation officer is immediately notified and asked to remove the client from the program.

b. Experiences of physical, emotional or sexual abuse

If it is determined that a client has been the victim of abuse she is referred to individual counseling outside of the program. The program refers clients to either a community agency or to the clinician on retainer to provide these services.

c. Negative peer influences

Team building is the first step towards minimizing negative peer influences. Periodically the girls, as a group, redevelop the program's mission statement and participation guidelines. This sets the tone for working as a team and learning to rely on one another both inside and outside of the program. The program coordinator also works with each girl to identify their strengths and talents and attempts to match them to a community organization as a pro-social alternative. Weekend activities are also scheduled to reduce the amount of free time a girl has to "hang out" or associate with negative peer influences.

d. Learning disabilities or attention deficit issues

According to the staff, until recently clients with learning disabilities had not been referred to the program, however the first client with Attention Deficit Disorder was recently admitted. To address the client's special needs, the coordinator plans to dedicate more one-on-one time to her. To complement that effort, group sessions that discretely address the disorder, other disabilities and their associated needs are also planned.

e. Mental Health issues

The Dixwell program was designed, not as a clinical program, but as one that provides life skills training, positive peer interactions and gender specific programming. When more intensive needs are identified, the program coordinator and probation officer work jointly to immediately make referrals to as many outside agencies as necessary.

f. Acceptance of antisocial activity as norm/criminal thinking

According to the program coordinator one of the DGG's strengths is its "keep it real" approach. This is accomplished through activities that range from visiting Niantic women's prison to becoming pen pals with adult female offenders to participating in budgeting case studies to make the girls better understand the consequences of maintaining a criminal lifestyle and having a record. Pains are taken to explain the kinds of social and employment limitations encountered by people with criminal records.

5. Provides services which are designed to prevent escalation in criminal activity

The DGG believes that the key to reducing recidivism is not to look at the activities that got the girl into the program but rather at their root causes. For example, they deal with why a client is truant, rather than just pushing school attendance. In addition, the program emphasizes self-esteem building and involvement in pro-social activities to prevent escalation of delinquent behaviors. The program treats the clients in a non-confrontational manner, promoting self-esteem and self-respect encouraging the clients to address their internal issues.

6. Involves the family in the client's rehabilitation program

Involving family proves very challenging for the DGG program. Many parents either do not find their children's charges significant or are insulted by the intervention. Despite these challenges staff actively attempt to work with parents through monthly home visits and by imparting greater communication skills to the girls that they can use at home with their parents.

7. Involves community members such as employers, relatives, teachers, clergy and community mentors in the clients' programming to the greatest extent possible

Other than staff and members of the Dixwell Community Center, the program does not involve community members in the clients' programming.

8. Promotes work ethic, social skills necessary to securing and maintaining a job, vocational training, and job placement assistance where age appropriate

The majority of clients are not old enough to work. For those that are, sessions on how to fill out an application and interview properly are conducted. During summer months the program concentrates on providing vocational skills in conjunction with clients being hired as day camp counselors at the community center and through other summer youth employment opportunities available in the community.

9. Provides educational skills and competencies necessary for the juvenile offender to function effectively and positively in the community

The DGG works actively with the schools to maintain good communication lines. Attendance checks and meetings with school staff are routinely conducted. This often results in the school notifying the program about a suspension and sending them homework on the girl's behalf. Also Yale students are recruited to provide weekly tutoring.

Life Skills:

Heavy emphasis is placed on empowerment, self-awareness and assertiveness as the program believes that the majority of its clients have spent a lifetime of being broken down and losing self-esteem. Lessons vary from learning to say no to personal hygiene to learning how to take responsibility for their actions to how to do laundry and balance a checkbook. These lessons are taught formally in group sessions and through personal mentoring by staff and volunteers.

10. Works with the school system to ensure offenders are appropriately enrolled and that their education needs are addressed

In general DGG clients do not experience enrollment problems. In instances of expulsion, the program coordinator will work with the school district to try to enroll the client at another school. If that is not possible, attempts are made to get the client involved with homebound tutoring to satisfy graduation requirements. Often the greatest enrollment difficulties arise when parents are not motivated to get their kids into school. To ensure that every effort is made on behalf of the client, the program coordinator attempts to develop a rapport with school personnel including teachers, guidance counselors and principals. Additional help often comes from one of the DGG board members who is a supervisor at the New Haven Board of Education. She has been instrumental in advocating on behalf of clients and getting the needed paperwork processed.

Once a client is enrolled, the program coordinator completes monthly visits to the schools and is involved in PPT meetings. In order to stay abreast of clients' school activities, the program coordinator requires daily attendance and progress reports from teachers or guidance counselors.

11. Provides structured community service opportunities for the clients

Community service is a regular component of the Dixwell Gateway program. The clients participate regularly in service activities at the Dixwell Community Center such as tutoring younger children and working with the elderly center members. In addition to these group activities, it is expected that should a girl be suspended, she will first complete her schoolwork and then assist the Community Center with any tasks needed.

12. Ensures structured supervision in the community to prevent delinquent activity while the client is a program participant

The program brings the girls into the community each week for recreational activities. During these events a supervision ratio of 10 clients to 1 staff occurs. Major events, such as field trips to New York City are also conducted on a quarterly basis. Generally a volunteer is recruited for the more significant events so that the supervision ratio is more manageable.

13. Recognizes and addresses the diversity of individual client needs within the program

According to the program coordinator, the Girls Gateway Program is unique in that they do not have the great diversity of need with which most juvenile justices programs struggle. As all clients are court-involved girls between ages 12 and 16, communal programming is geared towards the general needs of this population. To supplement the group programming, individual service plans, goals and issues are routinely monitored and addressed in one-on-one sessions with the program coordinator and the part-time social worker.

14. Keeps abreast of and utilizes current research on effective interventions strategies for the juvenile delinquent population

The Dixwell coordinator primarily keeps abreast of current topics with the assistance of CSSD staff that provide relevant literature, especially materials regarding gender specific programming. The program coordinator readily admits that it is often difficult to steal away from the program for training, as there is no one to assume her responsibilities in her absence.

Probation Input:

Two New Haven POs who have clients in the Dixwell program were interviewed. They indicated that they are not fully aware of what services the Dixwell program actually provides to their clients, as they do not receive any written reports on client progress in the program. While both POs expressed frustration with the lack of communication from Dixwell staff, they indicated that this is not unique to the Dixwell program. Other juvenile programs, in which they have clients, are similarly remiss in providing the POs with written progress or discharge reports.

Both POs indicated that they thought most of the services described herein are provided, based on their clients' discussion of their program experience. However, neither PO has had a client linked to outside services through the Dixwell program. The POs also thought that family involvement was minimal, primarily due to the lack of staff time available for it.

The officers expressed concern in general regarding the resources dedicated to the program, especially in terms of staffing. They indicated several times that due to the presence of only one full-time staff person, several of the above-mentioned service offerings are harder to implement. Also, one of the POs expressed significant concerns about program reliability with only one staff member. He indicated that the program has often been canceled without his being notified. He has learned of the cancellations after-the-fact from his clients. The other officer stated that due to staffing and resource constraints, the program has not been able to carry out its responsibility to transport the clients home from the program. Her client has recently discontinued attending the program due to these difficulties.

While both POs expressed concerns about the program's staffing, communication and reliability, they indicated confidence in the program coordinator's ability to make a difference in the clients. The POs spoke of the coordinator's dedication to the clients, her ability to engage them, and the clients' respect for and enjoyment of the program.

Outreach And Monitoring, Hartford, The North American Family Institute (NAFI)

Program Model:

The NAFI Outreach and Monitoring program monitors clients within the client's community through visits to the client's home, school and neighborhood hangouts. The program uses a normative model, emphasizing the importance of working with the individual within his or her immediate group, family, and environment. In addition to frequent unannounced visits to track the clients, clients are expected to participate in some life skills groups, recreation activities and perform community service.

Clients Served:

The program is designed to primarily serve adjudicated juvenile delinquents who have demonstrated some at-risk behavior but have minimal clinical needs. In addition to 31 slots for adjudicated delinquents the program has 8 slots for Family with Service Needs (FWSN) clients. The program also serves some court-involved pre-adjudicated youth that are expected to be disposed to the program following adjudication.

The clients referred to the program span a range of risk levels – from low-risk first-time offenders to juveniles with felony charges who have not fared well in a residential program. As of June 2001, the program had 6 FWSN and 32 delinquent clients enrolled.

Time Spent in the Program:

Clients spend an average of 6 to 9 months in the program.

The amount of time the clients actively participate in the program on a weekly basis depends upon the client's program level and needs. Clients begin at the highest intensity level and are graduated to lower intensity levels. Levels are based upon points earned for appropriate behavior and program compliance. On level three, clients are seen 5 to 7 times per week (in approximately 5 to 15 minute increments each time). On level two, clients are visited 3 to 5 times per week. On level one, clients are visited 1 to 3 times each week. Clients are also required to call into the program between 1 and 3 times/day depending on their level. Sometimes the call-in is just to report the client's whereabouts, whereas other times the caseworker and client may address a variety of issues via the phone contact.

Clients may be seen more often than the pre-determined number of visits, depending on their needs. For example, if through a client call-in or a visit to a school, a caseworker determines face-to-face contact with the client is needed that day, a visit will be made. When clients are placed on a crisis prevention plan, they are tracked daily.

Client participation in recreation, group sessions and community service activities also adds to the amount of time they spend with NAFI staff. Clients are expected to participate in at least one group cycle while they are in the program. The groups meet for one hour per week for 4 weeks. Each client must also participate in at least one recreation activity per month. Additionally, clients sometimes participate in group community service activities.

Staffing:

The Hartford team consists of a program coordinator and 4 caseworkers. This leads to a caseload ratio of approximately 10 to 1. The 4 caseworkers share responsibility for all 39 clients. In addition, a NAFI clinician provides part-time services and other NAFI staff assist with recreation services.

Caseworkers are regularly available between 8:30 a.m. until 10:00 p.m. with crisis intervention services available on a 24 hour / 7 day basis.

Basic Finances:

The NAFI Outreach program receives 100% of its revenue from CSSD. In FY 2001, CSSD provided $505,218 to the North Central NAFI Outreach program (this region includes Hartford and New Britain). The average daily cost of serving a client in FY 2000 was approximately $20. The program's largest cost sources in serving clients are staff salaries and mileage.

Services:

In addition to monitoring the clients and checking their progress on behavior and academic goals, the caseworkers attempt to use the tracking time to provide other services to the clients. On tracking visits, caseworkers sometimes advocate for clients, for example by assisting them with linkages to community-based services. Tracking visits are also used to contact the family and to provide advocacy on behalf of the family.

Caseworkers also use the tracking visits to informally teach life skills to the clients, such as discussing legal matters, anger management and job seeking techniques. The topics covered are listed in the NAFI "life skills packet" which focuses on 22 categories. The caseworkers are expected to address these life skills issues with clients over the course of the client's programming through both one-on-one and group time.

Clients participate in groups for one hour a week for 4 weeks. In the groups the clients discuss life skill topics such as childbirth or education. Clients also participate in recreation such as museum tours, attending sporting events and fitness activities. A specialized recreation activity offered by the NAFI Outreach program is National Youth Project Using Mini-Bikes (NYPUM) program. In the NYPUM program, the clients are trained in the maintenance and use of mini-bikes. Clients are able to participate in activities such as NYPUM, by earning program points.

NAFI Outreach and Monitoring clients are also required to participate in at least 15 hours of community service (more if mandated by the courts). Community service is performed at a variety of venues, including soup kitchens, local farms, nursing homes, animal shelters and schools. According to the staff, these activities as well as NYPUM are used to provide vocational training to the clients.

Outreach And Monitoring, Hartford, The North American Family Institute (NAFI)

1. Maximizes the reintegration of the juvenile offender into the community upon release from the program

The NAFI Outreach program focuses on client reintegration immediately upon client entry into the program by working with the client within their community. The staff encourages and assists clients to access community resources, which they can continue to use after program exit. At the time of intake, the staff provide each client and family with a resource packet, listing local agencies providing services such as counseling and employment training.

Staff assist clients with locating and enrolling in local services that meet their needs. However, in an effort to empower clients, staff encourage them to take the lead in utilizing the community resources available to them. NAFI also tries to empower the parents to facilitate their children's linkages to community services. In a recent month, approximately ¼ of the NAFI Hartford clients were linked to neighborhood programs, including the Boys and Girls Club, a local recreation center and counseling at the Community Child Guidance Clinic and the Institute of Living. Many of the other clients were also already participating in external community programs prior to joining NAFI through court or self-referral.

In addition, the program's point and level system is designed to foster reintegration by phasing out the intensity of tracking and program structure over time, promoting more self-reliance and self-accountability.

After Care:

In their discharge reports, the NAFI staff suggest after-care plans for each client. For example, NAFI might suggest that the client start or maintain counseling or enroll in night school. The staff try to link the clients to community services or facilitate their start in after-care plans while the client is in the program. NAFI staff also review the community resource packet with the client and their family again at the time of discharge. Once they have terminated from the program, NAFI does not assist them with after-care, however, they encourage the client and the family to call the program staff if they need support and to let the staff know their progress.

2. Is outcome-based and evaluates its success in achieving desired outcomes

When asked their program goals, the NAFI staff responded that their goals are to be at full client capacity; to be fully staffed; and to have each client be as successful as possible. To evaluate their success in these areas, the program tracks client census and staffing and reports these as well as successful discharges monthly to CSSD. They track each client's goals and report on client progress in a monthly narrative report to the probation officers. The staff also report on individual client progress at termination in the client's discharge report. The program does not analyze client goal achievement in the aggregate.

In addition to the periodic utilization and narrative reports required by CSSD, NAFI also produces a monthly report tallying daily activities conducted with each client, such as home visits, family contacts and community service. The report tracks these activities for each client and in the aggregate. While the report does not track client progress or outcomes, it does demonstrate the services provided to, and time spent, with each client. The NAFI staff use this monthly report as a client review and management tool.

The NAFI program has recently started to track client progress post-program experience by contacting all clients who have exited the program since July 1, 2000. Through phone contacts with clients and their families, the staff is trying to collect information on where the clients are six months after they have exited the program. No aggregate data is available yet.

Definition of Successful vs. Unsuccessful Discharges:

The NAFI Outreach program defines a successful discharge as one that is a planned termination, meaning that the client terminates when their probation was supposed to end. The most common reason for an unsuccessful discharge in NAFI is the client requiring more intensive services such as a residential placement, because they have not bought into the accountability of the program. For example, they are not abiding by curfews or attending school.

3. Includes assessment methods at intake to determine the interventions most likely to change behaviors and norms of the individual clients

The NAFI program does not perform an initial assessment in addition to the pre-dispositional study and psychological evaluation provided by probation. The caseworkers informally assess the clients over time. After 30 days of program participation, the primary caseworker will write a detailed report documenting the facts they observe regarding the client. As the NAFI staff explained, they do not diagnose the problem's source because they are not a clinical program.

At the caseworker's initial meeting with the family, the NAFI caseworker draws up an initial Individual Program Plan (IPP), which describes the clients' needs and goals. The IPP is revised monthly. It is goal oriented and primarily focuses on maintaining a service or behavior. For example, if a client needs mental health therapy, the service plan might focus on the client finding a therapist, scheduling the appointment and going to the session. Another goal might be to attend school every day.

4. Addresses various client risk factors, which may contribute to the client's delinquent behavior, such as;

a. Substance Abuse

If a client shows signs of substance abuse, the NAFI staff informs the probation officer immediately and encourages them to have the client tested. If a substance abuse problem is indicated, the NAFI staff will refer the client to an outside agency for treatment. The NAFI program does not directly provide substance abuse treatment. The program provides substance abuse education through "advocate time" with caseworkers and through group sessions.

b. Experiences of physical, emotional or sexual abuse

NAFI also uses outside counseling agencies to address physical, emotional or sexual abuse that a client may have experienced. The staff indicated that finding appropriate referral slots for clients to address these issues is difficult in some areas because of a lack of community resources. The external agencies sometimes have waiting lists. The biggest obstacle, however, is getting the parents to follow through. NAFI staff sometimes ask the courts to require the counseling as a condition of probation to ensure follow-through on the referrals. Clients are often already court mandated to participate in external counseling when they enroll in NAFI.

If abuse is indicated during the program, the NAFI staff make referrals to the DCF "Care-line" and try to obtain DCF services for the client, where appropriate.

c. Negative peer influences

The normative culture philosophy of NAFI emphasizes positive peer influence as a rehabilitation tool. The program encourages all clients to be involved in positive social activities. The staff try to help the clients to recognize their choices and their ability to make a positive choice in front of their peers. In addition, through neighborhood monitoring, the staff strives to ensure client compliance with any "no contact" orders, ordering client separation from certain peers.

d. Learning disabilities or attention deficit issues

To address learning disabilities (LD), NAFI ensures that the client has a support system within school to address their LD issues and may provide tutoring, if necessary. The staff monitor the medications of attention deficit disorder (ADD) clients to ensure they are taking them. In addition, staff have worked with families on diet to make sure the clients are not eating foods that contribute to hyperactivity. The NAFI staff refers clients to outside agencies to address LD or ADD issues as necessary.

e. Mental health issues

The NAFI staff report that they have recently seen an increase in the number of clients with psychiatric issues. NAFI refers clients to external agencies for counseling to address mental health issues, as needed. Staff report that Hartford typically has slots available but that other communities often do not. If a client shows signs of suicidal or homicidal ideation, the NAFI staff will immediately refer the client to their mobile crisis unit or the emergency room. They will make sure that the client is evaluated and follow-up on recommendations, for example, if the client needs medication. If it is determined that the client needs a psychiatric evaluation, NAFI will ask the probation officer to request it in court.

f. Acceptance of antisocial activity as norm/criminal thinking

NAFI caseworkers try to teach the clients empathy for their victims and encourage responsibility for their actions as strategies to reduce antisocial thinking.

5. Provides services which are designed to prevent escalation in criminal activity

As a prevention strategy, the NAFI program provides the clients with options of more positive ways to spend their free time, such as in community service activities or by joining the local YMCA. The NAFI caseworkers also repeatedly discuss with the clients what brought them to court and how to avoid repeat occurrences. They discuss how the offense makes the client feel and will sometimes help them to write a letter to the victim to express these feelings. In addition, NAFI staff address the importance of education and legal issues with clients as part of life skills. Lastly, the program uses sanctions and rewards to teach accountability.

6. Involves the family in the client's rehabilitation program

Caseworkers attempt weekly contact with each client's family to update them on the client's status, obtain feedback on the client's progress at home and discuss family issues. If the family is not present during a home visit, the caseworker will try to reach them by phone. In an effort to empower the parents to set limits and rules for the clients, NAFI staff sometimes create a contract for the parent and client to sign regarding rules at home. The staff may also include behavior at home in a client's IPP.

The NAFI caseworkers refer families to services as appropriate, such as health insurance and heating assistance. In addition, the Outreach and Monitoring program offers monthly family workshops on a regional basis, but families rarely attend. The staff has surveyed the families to gain a better understanding of the topics they would like to discuss during the workshops and what additional incentives they may be interested in obtaining through attending. Attendance remains sparse, despite these and other staff outreach efforts.

7. Involves community members, such as employers, relatives, teachers, clergy and community mentors in the client's programming to the greatest extent possible

In addition to school personnel, the caseworkers will try to contact anyone else in the community with whom the client is regularly involved, such as counselors, coaches and clergy.

8. Promotes work ethic, social skills necessary to securing and maintaining a job, vocational training, and job placement assistance where age appropriate

The NAFI program promotes work ethic values through its coverage of proper school behaviors such as to arrive on time and be respectful of teachers and supervisors. NAFI facilitates client job searches by running job seeking groups during which they share newspaper ads with the clients, conduct mock interviews and assist the clients in the completion of sample job applications. NAFI does not place kids in jobs directly. They provide applications from the Urban League's summer employment program and help the clients complete them. Some clients have secured jobs this way. NAFI clients can receive vocational training through the National Youth with Mini-Bikes recreation program (bike repair and maintenance) and through community service (i.e. working in a soup kitchen). NAFI staff estimate that approximately 30% of the clients learn vocational skills while in the program.

9. Provides educational skills and competencies necessary for the juvenile offender to function effectively and positively in the community

The clients' individual performance plans often include education goals such as attending school and doing homework. Caseworkers check with clients on their progress in these areas on a daily basis. Caseworkers also check with the school personnel on client progress. When the client is not in school due to suspension or illness, NAFI staff will pick up their homework and monitor the client in the home. Caseworkers might also provide tutoring during a home visit.

Life Skills:

The NAFI program uses an "Advocate Packet" to facilitate caseworker coverage of various topics designed to improve client functioning in the community. The packet lists specific topics across 22 categories such as legal issues, health care and anger management. The program does not schedule specific time for these topics to be covered, unless client accountability is an issue. Instead, caseworkers strive to cover these topics on a more informal basis through visits to the clients, during community service and recreation time. The topics are sometimes covered more formally in groups. Caseworkers will check off when a specific topic has been covered with a client and document the coverage in the client's monthly report.

10. Works with the school system to ensure offenders are appropriately enrolled and that their education needs are addressed

NAFI staff report that clients do not often encounter difficulties enrolling in the appropriate school. Sometimes schools do not want to re-enroll a student, coming out of a residential program or attempting to transfer schools if the student had behavioral problems in the past. The school may try to direct the client into a shortened day program or homebound tutoring.

In these situations the NAFI staff assists the parents in contacting the school or will contact the schools directly if the parents do not follow through. The staff try to empower the parents to advocate for their kids, but will step-in when the parents need assistance. The NAFI staff schedule and attend all necessary meetings, ensure medical exams are up-to-date, and carry out other activities needed for enrollment.

Once the client is enrolled, NAFI tries to ensure that their educational needs are met by attending PPT meetings and contacting teachers and guidance counselors where client difficulties are indicated. They also providing tutoring as necessary and monitor behavior and attendance.

11. Provides structured community service opportunities for the clients

All clients are required to complete 15 hours of community service, either as part of a NAFI group outing or on their own with adult supervision. Examples of community service include working at a local farm or in a soup kitchen.

12. Ensures structured supervision in the community to prevent delinquent activity while the client is a program participant

The caseworkers provide ongoing supervision in the community through unannounced visits to the clients' homes, schools and hangouts. The clients are also required to call into the program between 1 and 3 times a day, depending on their level. On group outings, the staff to client ratio is always at least 1 to 4.

13. Recognizes and addresses the diversity of individual client needs within the program;

Because the monitoring program is very individualized, addressing the programming to fit different client needs is inherent to its design. Caseworkers visit clients individually and link clients to other services they may need on a case-by-case basis. Clients are selected to participate in groups with topics appropriate to their needs (i.e. education; self-esteem).

14. Keeps abreast of and utilizes current research on effective intervention strategies for the juvenile delinquent population

All new NAFI Outreach and Monitoring staff are required to attend a 40-hour orientation training. On an ongoing basis, staff are encouraged to attend trainings at least once a month, primarily the trainings are provided by ETP, contracted through CSSD. NAFI staff also attend community trainings, such as those hosted by Planned Parenthood. In addition, a 2 ½ day training is held annually at the NAFI corporate office for all supervisors.

To disseminate the knowledge from these and other trainings, NAFI uses in-service time at caseworker group meetings for staff to share information gained. For example, caseworker teams are attempting to incorporate more gender-specific programming into their approach based on information disseminated following a recent ETP training.

Probation Input:

The POs interviewed concurred with the above depiction of the services offered by the NAFI Outreach and Monitoring program. All of the POs interviewed spoke highly of the NAFI program, pointing out the range and quality of services provided by NAFI with limited funds. They emphasized NAFI's ability to work with the parents more than site-based programs, since the NAFI staff come to the family's home on a regular basis. Other program strengths highlighted by the POs included: the frequency with which NAFI clients are seen by NAFI staff; NAFI's utilization of referrals and community service opportunities for the clients; and the program's quick response to crises, using crisis prevention plans.

The officers also indicated that NAFI rarely discharges clients unsuccessfully. The program tends not to discharge clients for behavioral problems. As one PO pointed out, however, the clients are less likely to commit attendance-related infractions since the NAFI staff comes to them, rather than expecting them to come to the program. The POs also highlighted NAFI's commitment to work with clients despite problems the client may demonstrate. One PO also emphasized NAFI's holistic approach to working with a client; working with their families, schools and communities, as a significant strength of the program.

The Choice Program, Hartford, Catholic Family Services

Program Model:

The Choice Program is an Outreach and Tracking program based upon a national model developed at the University of Maryland. The program uses a caseworker team approach to track juveniles on parole and to connect them with services in their community. A key element of the model's philosophy is to intervene often. The juveniles are visited by caseworkers as much as 5 times per day. The program is built from an assets approach rather than a deficit approach, building on the skills of the youth. In addition to monitoring the clients, the program case managers provide advocacy support to the clients and work with them on relationship development. The program strives to promote the positive development of the clients through pro-social activities within their homes and communities.

Clients Served:

The Hartford Choice program is used as an after-care program for adjudicated delinquents committed to DCF who have been released from the Long Lane School or another DCF residential placement. Most of the clients are serving an 18-month DCF commitment. About 60% of the clients come from DCF residential placements and the remainder are from the Long Lane School. The program is designed to serve clients with a combination of risk-levels. First-time offenders are typically not referred to the program. The staff estimates that about 70 to 80% of the clients have violent histories. The program serves both males and females. Currently about ¼ of the clients are female.

The program serves about 40 clients on a daily basis and 100-120 each year.

Time Spent in the Program:

Most clients are enrolled in the program for an average of 5 to 6 months. There are some clients who stay in the program up to 12 months and some that do not make it to 2 months, usually because they are returned to a residential placement. The program also sometimes receives referrals for clients who only have 2 months left on parole. They work to link these clients to other services and encourage them to continue the program voluntarily.

The clients are primarily served in their schools, homes and communities, rather than on-site at the program. The clients are typically contacted 3 to 5 times/day, 7 days/week. Visits tend to be a little less frequent on the weekends. The base level of contact is a minimum of 3 times/day. The caseworkers usually visit the clients once in school, once after school and once in the evening. They may not see the client in the school but will check on their attendance and their progress with school personnel. Extra visits are made depending upon need. The clients are also often with the staff for community service activities, groups or for drug testing. The clients come to the Hartford site for groups once every two weeks.

Staffing:

The Choice program uses a case management team approach. Each team consists of three caseworkers that share approximately 22 clients. The staff on each team rotates seeing the kids so that they all see all of the kids. There is not a primary caseworker for a client, other than for purposes of completing paperwork. Each team debriefs together every morning. There are 2 teams in Hartford and one supervisor who facilitates the debriefings and oversees the teams.

The casework staff are hired right out of college on a one-year non-renewable contract. Their tenure with the program is treated like a year of service. They work 40-60 hours/week (40 one week then 50 and then 60). In addition to their salary, upon completion of the year the staff receive a $4700 stipend to use for higher education or for existing student loans paid for by Americorps. Staff are hired on a rotating basis so that teams do not lose more than one staff person at a time.

In addition to the 6 caseworkers (3 per team) and the team supervisor, there is a program assistant and the program receives administrative oversight from the Director of youth services on a part-time basis.

Basic Finances:

Approximately 99 percent of the program's budget is funded by DCF. The program receives some funds from United Way and other youth organizations to cover small expenses like special field trips. The FY 2001 budget for the program is $411,392 (this includes a special $29,000 DCF allocation to pay for clinical services through the Child Guidance Clinic). The average daily cost per client excluding the clinical funding is $11.92. The largest cost sources are staff, then transportation and then program supplies.

The Choice program regularly takes advantage of external services for their clients, which are funded outside of their budget, such as the Boat Builders program operated by South End Community Services and funded in part by DCF, and services provided by Catholic Family Services, Choice's parent agency.

Services:

In addition to monitoring the clients, the Choice caseworkers use the daily visits to provide advocacy support to the clients, to check on their school progress, to link the clients with and transport them to after-school programs, and to communicate with the parents. In some cases, the caseworkers might work with the parents on mediation and parenting skills. All clients are expected to participate in a pro-social after-school activity such as, employment, a sport, or a structured program. The program links clients with specific programs if they do not locate a program on their own. Choice uses the authority of parole services to require participation in such outside services, where needed. Additionally, the Choice program offers weekly recreation activities such as sporting events. The clients are expected to attend a life skills group meeting every other week, covering topics such as anger management and proper hygiene. Clients are assigned to small sub-groups based on the topics that are most appropriate to their situation.

The Choice Program, Hartford, Catholic Family Services

1. Maximizes the reintegration of the juvenile offender into the community upon release from the program

The Choice program emphasizes linking clients to community programs and job placements with which they can continue to stay involved after program exit. The programs to which Choice most frequently refers clients are vocational programs run by the South End Community Services which are supported by DCF funding; mental health and substance abuse counseling at the Institute for Hispanic Families, run by Catholic Family Services; and City of Hartford Recreation Services. In addition to these, Choice refers a smaller number of clients to other community service, recreation, mental health, health and vocational programs. Another reintegration strategy used by Choice is to try to instill a general structure of accountability in the home by working with the parents. In addition, the Choice program offers clients case management services at the Catholic Family Services' Youth Services Center after they have completed the program.

After Care:

The Choice program develops an after-care plan for each client. They begin to discuss after-care options with each client about three weeks prior to discharge and try to link them to any new services or job placements prior to discharge. The Choice staff also invite clients to continue program participation on a voluntary basis which many clients accept. The staff do not formally follow-up with clients once they have terminated from the program.

2. Is outcome-based and evaluates its success in achieving desired outcomes

The primary goals of the Choice program are successful reunification of youth into the community and reduction of recidivism. The Choice program tracks the number of clients who were arrested while they were in the program, but they do not track post-program recidivism. The program evaluates their success by looking at client accountability, skill development and goal achievement. They do not analyze client goal achievement in the aggregate. However, the program does analyze certain other client progress statistics in the aggregate such as the percentage of clients attending school. These statistics describe progress while clients are in the program, not after program exit. These statistics are reported to DCF on a quarterly basis.

Definition of Successful vs. Unsuccessful Discharges:

The Choice program defines a successful termination as one where the client terminates at the planned time and is stabilized in the community. The program does not consider a termination a success if the client is not attending school or is out of control in the home, even if parole considers it a success. The most common reason for unsuccessful termination is re-arrest.

3. Includes assessment methods at intake to determine the interventions most likely to change behaviors and norms of the individual clients

As all clients come from residential placements, case files generally include a battery of (psychiatric and psycho-social) assessment results. Choice supplements these assessment results with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) from the schools and some basic family intake information. This information is used to develop the individual service plans for the clients. Over time, caseworkers observe other issues contributing to the delinquent behavior of the client, which are considered as part of periodic service plan reviews.

At intake, clients are expected to sign a standardized service plan agreeing to receive the array of Choice services such as behavior management, recreation and transportation. This plan is revised after 45 days of program participation to address the client's unique service needs. The Choice staff works with the client to mutually develop appropriate client-specific goals. These goals are included in the Individual Service Plan (ISP), which serves as both a progress report and a service plan for the coming month. An example of a client goal would be to involve the client in a specific pro-social after-school activity. The staff encourage parents to participate in the goal setting process with the expectation that they should ultimately enforce and reward these activities with their child.

4. Addresses various client risk factors, which may contribute to the client's delinquent behavior, such as;

a. Substance Abuse

The Choice program screens clients for 8 different substances. The clients do not know how often or when they will be tested. If a client tests positive for substance abuse, the Choice staff usually refers the client for external counseling. They refer clients to a variety of local treatment programs, offering a range of service, from once a week group sessions to more intensive counseling 3-4 times per week. They are usually able to find slots for clients. However, the staff report that it is difficult to get paid slots for clients with marijuana problems, as opposed to harder drugs, because insurance will usually not pay for treatment in these cases since marijuana is not seen as an addictive drug.

Caseworkers will informally counsel clients with substance abuse issues and will try to counsel the family to make sure that they understand the consequences of the behavior. The caseworkers also attempt to involve the parents in punishment of the client. If the abuse is serious enough, the staff may recommend a revocation of the client's parole.

b. Experiences of physical, emotional or sexual abuse

If a client comes to the Choice program with an indicated history of abuse for which they have received counseling in their residential program, Choice will try to find a local counselor to work with the client. Choice will also inform the staff so that they are aware of the issues while informally counseling the client. However, they primarily rely on external counseling to address these issues.

c. Negative peer influences

The Choice program tries to involve the peers of a client in the program by offering services to them like resume and job placement assistance. The program does this under the premise that by engaging the group of friends in pro-social behavior, the client will be more likely to engage in more positive activities. The Choice program also requires all clients to be in some form of pro-social after-school activity, such as sports and job training programs, for at least 3 days/week.

d. Learning disabilities or attention deficit issues

Learning disabilities and attention deficit disorder are addressed through Individual Education Plans (IEPs), for which the school district is responsible. The Choice staff often provide advocacy to their clients in this area to ensure their IEP needs are met. The staff estimate that 85% of current clients are special education students.

e. Mental health issues

The Choice program tries to refer clients with mental health issues, such as anxiety or depression, to external agencies for counseling but there are usually waiting lists. The staff report that most private providers do not except the HMOs in which the clients are enrolled, so the clients have to go to clinics for mental health services and the clinics often have 6-month waiting lists. The Choice program has a contract with Catholic Family Services to provide psychiatric and individual counseling to program clients but they are short on space also.

f. Acceptance of antisocial activity as norm/criminal thinking

The Choice program tries to first establish trust between the caseworker and client through a mentoring relationship. Once trust is gained, caseworkers try to dissuade clients from accepting criminal behavior as the norm. The Choice program also incorporates discussion of morality into the group sessions.

5. Provides services which are designed to prevent escalation in criminal activity

The Choice program recently started serving clients while they are still in a residential placement prior to their release. Previously, the program only served clients once they were discharged from their prior placement. The program uses this time as a prevention strategy, to try to facilitate a healthier return to the client's family and community.

To reduce the risk of re-offense, Choice emphasizes support and guidance combined with ongoing structure and accountability. The program also believes facilitating parental vigilance is a key to preventing recidivism and therefore encourages the clients to be accountable to their parents. In addition, requirements to participate in pro-social after-school activities and school attendance monitoring are used to reduce unstructured free time when delinquency may occur. Lastly, program staff encourage the clients to develop long-term goals.

6. Involves the family in the client's rehabilitation program

Choice caseworkers attempt to contact the client's parents on a daily basis to share updates on their progress. The staff report that most families are responsive to the program and form positive relationships with caseworkers. However there are some resistant families. Strategies to improve parent involvement are emphasized in staff training. The program aims to empower the parents through linkages to outside services and by emphasizing client accountability in the home. Services provided to the parents may include mediation, parenting skills, and referrals to outside services such as literacy classes and mental health counseling. Approximately 30 percent of the clients' families attend mental health counseling.

7. Involves community members, such as employers, relatives, teachers, clergy and community mentors in the client's programming to the greatest extent possible

The caseworkers try to reach out to anyone in the community with whom the client regularly interacts – teachers, extended family and peers.

8. Promotes work ethic, social skills necessary to securing and maintaining a job, vocational training, and job placement assistance where age appropriate

The Choice program strives to place most of their age appropriate clients in jobs and is successful with close to 95% of the clients. Clients work in standard entry-level jobs. The program also collaborates with schools to help clients obtain internships and with recreation centers to get summer camp counselor jobs. Catholic Family Services hires many Choice clients as camp counselors and sometimes for office work. Additionally, approximately 60% of the clients participate in the Boat Builders Program, operated by South End Community Services, for which they are paid a stipend by DCF. Caseworkers work with clients on an individual basis to address work ethic issues such as appropriate language and attire on the job and timelines.

9. Provides educational skills and competencies necessary for the juvenile offender to function effectively and positively in the community

The staff monitor client progress in the schools through on-going communication with school personnel, regarding attendance, behavior and academic issues. The caseworkers make daily school visits, communicating often with secretaries, vice principals, special education and other teachers. The staff report that caseworkers meet with teachers about once every month and a half on behalf of a given client. Choice staff also sometimes provide tutoring to the clients.

Life Skills:

The Choice program provides education groups once every two weeks covering topics such as life skills and anger management. In addition, the caseworkers help facilitate the client's effective community functioning by assisting clients with activities like obtaining their drivers licenses and opening bank accounts.

10. Works with the school system to ensure offenders are appropriately enrolled and that their education needs are addressed

The Choice staff report that the enrollment of clients in Hartford public schools is less of a problem now than it was in the past. The creation of the Hartford Alternative Learning Opportunities (HALO) program, a short-term student assessment program, has provided a conduit for clients coming out of Long Lane to enroll in the appropriate Hartford school. However, the Choice staff report that there are still some glitches with transitioning special education students through this program. Additionally, the staff report that they still encounter enrollment difficulties for clients coming out of residential programs, who are not served by HALO. In the case of these clients, enrollment difficulties are more often encountered for non-special education students since they are not tracked as closely by the Hartford Board of Education while they are in the residential programs.

To handle enrollment problems, the Choice staff accompany all clients when they register for school. They usually try to ensure the client's enrollment will be processed appropriately prior to registration by contacting the school. This often involves working with the Support Services Division of the Hartford Board of Education.

Once the client is enrolled in the appropriate school, the Choice staff tries to ensure the client is in the appropriate classes and getting the services they need by attending all of the client's PPTs. The staff report that the Hartford schools are known for not following IEP goals. The staff advocate on behalf of the clients to make sure that special education needs are met.

11. Provides structured community service opportunities for the clients

The Choice program does not mandate community service participation of its clients. Community service is used as a consequence for negative behavior. Service sites include soup kitchens, homeless shelters and Habitat for Humanity.

12. Ensures structured supervision in the community to prevent delinquent activity while the client is a program participant

The staff supervises the clients in the community by tracking them on an ongoing basis 7 days/week. The staff to client ratio on group outings is 1 to 4.

13. Recognizes and addresses the diversity of individual client needs within the program

The individual service plans are meant to address each client's specific needs and interests. The model for intervention does not change regardless of the client; only how the specific issues are addressed. Clients are placed into groups based on their presenting issues. Additionally, the case management team may decide that one team member is better suited to address a specific client situation than the others, considering factors such as gender and personality.

14. Keeps abreast of and utilizes current research on effective intervention strategies for the juvenile delinquent population

Choice's parent agency, Catholic Family Services (CFS), provides ongoing trainings, which Choice staff can attend. CFS staff also review national and local trends in serving youth and pass applicable information on to Choice. Additionally, the Director of Youth Services brings information back to the Choice program from national and local conferences.

An example of the program utilizing current research is the emphasis the program has placed on training staff in dealing with families. Due to the multi-systemic therapy (MST) research on family involvement, Choice has devoted more time to training staff on family issues. Additionally, the program coordinator now conducts the initial family intake, rather than a caseworker, to emphasize the program's offerings to the family and the importance of family involvement in the program up-front

Parole Input:

The Parole Officers interviewed were impressed by Choice and the services they provide, indicating that without them transition from residential placement would not be so seamless. The officers found the depiction of the program to be accurate. They felt it was especially important to highlight the role Choice plays in reintegrating clients after a residential placement.

Prior to a client being discharged from residential placement and officially starting their after-care with Choice, the Choice staff attend client PPT and IEP meetings at the residential site on behalf of the client. The Choice staff also supervise the clients during weekend furloughs and scheduled visits with the family. There have been numerous instances where Choice has taken it upon themselves to improve the living conditions to which their future client will return after residential placement. For example, Choice staff have assisted families in obtaining Section 8 vouchers and in identifying better housing options and purchased appliances, groceries and cleaning supplies for them. The program also is actively involved in re-enrolling the clients in school.

The parole officers also indicated that the Choice staff often link both the clients and their families to services in the community once they are in the program. In sum, the parole officers described the program as very well-rounded, flexible, and helpful to parole in coordinating needed services for the clients.

Juvenile Supervision Reporting Center, Hartford, Community Solutions, Inc.

Program Model:

The JSRC offers gender specific comprehensive services based on a continuum of care designed to foster reintegration into the community. The program provides services on-site in its Hartford location to both residential and non-residential clients. Services include education, recreation, community service, groups and case management services. Each client is provided services based on their individual needs. The JSRC uses a cognitive behavioral and skills approach, which explores the attitudes, thoughts, emotions and actions of the client and addresses these through social skills and problem solving training.

Clients Served:

The JSRC is designed to serve moderate to high-risk adjudicated juveniles. Some of the clients referred to the JSRC are pre-adjudicated with the expectation that they will remain in the JSRC post-adjudication. Most of the juveniles referred to the JSRC have been in the juvenile system for a substantial period of time and have failed out of other interventions.

The program currently has slots for 30 juveniles, 10 of which are for residential clients. As of June 2001, the program was serving 23 kids daily.

Since December 2000, the Hartford JSRC serves only boys. While gender-specific programming is usually discussed in terms of benefiting females, the JSRC has seen improvements in client behavior and more successful discharge rates since becoming an all-boys program.

Time Spent in the Program:

Clients spend between 4 and 6 months in the program on average. According to the JSRC staff, 6 months is the optimum length of stay to allow time for thorough service delivery without over-saturating the clients.

All of the clients are required to attend the program every day, except when they earn a furlough. The ten residential clients are expected to be in the program 24 hours/day. Fourteen of the program's non-residential slots are for clients who attend school at the program site. These clients are expected to be in the program 12 hours/day. The remaining 6 slots are for clients who attend school outside of the program and are expected to attend the program from 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m..

Staffing:

The JSRC program has 17 staff members including the program director and assistant director, court liaison, substance abuse counselor, recreation/community service coordinator, direct care shift staff and case managers. There are three case managers who are responsible for providing ongoing case management services to each client. Each case manager has a caseload of approximately 10 clients.

Basic Finances:

With the exception of a small food subsidy from the USDA school lunch program, 100% of the program's funds come from CSSD. The annual budget for FY 2001 is $928,311. The program's average daily cost per client is $84.77, averaged across residential and non-residential clients. The JSRC's largest cost sources in serving clients are personnel costs and facilities.

Services:

The JSRC provides on-site education services to the clients through the Hartford Board of Education. In addition to school, the clients have a homework hour, during which tutoring is available. The students then participate in groups, assigned by risk level, where different life skills trainings are provided.

Life skills trainings include social skills using the Skills Streaming Curriculum, which promotes pro-social behaviors such as listening and learning to understand others. Life skills groups also cover topics such as anger management and substance abuse prevention. Other topics covered through the program include laundry and cleaning.

Specialized groups are also conducted based on client need such as substance abuse counseling and intensive anger management. There are also weekly family group sessions for the families of both residential and non-residential clients.

Structured recreation activities offered include the Pope Park basketball league; the Venture Club (a Boy Scouts troop), attending sporting events and roller-skating. The clients also go on weekly field trip to museums, factories and other local sites.

All of the clients are required to participate in at least 10 hours of community service per month. A major community service activity involving all of the clients is the Holcomb Farm project. The clients start learning how to grow vegetables in March and then in April they prepare the soil and plant the vegetables and fruits. They tend to the farm all spring and summer and harvest the farm in the fall. At the end of the season, the clients prepare a feast with the harvest and deliver the food to senior centers in Hartford.

Juvenile Supervision Reporting Center, Hartford, Community Solutions, Inc.

1. Maximizes the reintegration of the juvenile offender into the community upon release from the program

The JSRC uses its skill development curriculum, focusing on life skills and social skills, to facilitate reintegration of clients into the community. The program also uses a graduated integration process, providing the clients with increased time in the community, while still monitoring them and pulling back if necessary. In addition, the JSRC staff try to link the clients to support and recreation services in their community while they are in the program and encourage their continuation after program exit.

The JSRC program has also entered into a pilot program with the Hartford Board of Education to facilitate the reintegration of JSRC clients into the Hartford public schools upon program exit. This program is described in more detail in the school enrollment section below.

After Care:

The JSRC staff develop a written after-care plan for each client and attempt to link the clients to the recommended services while they are still in the program. The staff often transport the clients to the service site initially and then identify transportation options for the clients after program exit. The staff also try to get the parents involved in the recommended after-care. Once a client has exited the JSRC, the case managers call them about once a week for 1 to 2 months to check on client progress and provide encouragement. These follow-up interactions are logged in a discharge tracking form. Lastly, the JSRC program uses its mentoring program (described below) as part of their after-care strategy. The staff encourage the clients' mentors to attend periodic program activities with the clients after discharge.

2. Is outcome-based and evaluates its success in achieving desired outcomes

The program's goals are successful reintegration into the community, reducing recidivism and ensuring the safety and security of the community. They measure goal achievement by looking at aggregate client success through pre and post program tests using the YLSI, SASSI and cognitive behavioral assessment tools.[2] The JSRC uses these tools to measure client change through the program and across the group of clients. The program also measures client goal achievement in the aggregate, such as the number of clients released to a lower level of supervision or who remain substance free throughout placement. Individual client progress on goals is recorded in discharge summaries. The JSRC reports the overall client outcomes to Community Solutions Inc. (CSI), its parent agency, on a monthly and quarterly basis. In addition the JSRC reports "critical indicators", such as utilization and use of restraints to CSI.

The JSRC staff also conduct follow-up phone calls with clients after program exit. The information collected through these calls is logged but it is not used for any formal evaluation.

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[2] The YLSI is the "Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory" and the SASSI is the "Substance Abuse Subtle Screening Inventory". These are nationally recognized assessment tools, which the JSRC uses to assess client risk level and indications of substance abuse.

Definition of Successful vs. Unsuccessful Discharges:

The JSRC considers a termination successful if the client leaves when planned and they return to their home and to school. If the client is sent to a lower risk program, the JSRC would also consider it a success. However, if the client is sent to a higher risk program (Long Lane), JSRC would not consider it a success, unless it was planned prior to program entry. The most common reasons for unsuccessful terminations are new offenses or repeated probation violations.

3. Includes assessment methods at intake to determine the interventions most likely to change behaviors and norms of the individual clients

The JSRC conducts several assessment tests on new clients to determine the factors contributing to the delinquent behaviors of the juvenile, including the YLSI, the SASSI, a Pride in Delinquency test, and a cognitive behavioral test. The JSRC uses these tests to analyze criminogenic factors, meaning the issues that contribute to delinquent behavior, rather than just observing the problem behavior (ex: negative relations, absence of appropriate leisure time, substance abuse). The program uses the YLSI to assess risk level and risk factors to determine to which general group (tiered by risk) and to which specialized groups to assign the client.

An individual service plan (ISP) is developed for each client based on his risk assessment. In addition to determining the client's risk group, each ISP lists client goals, means of achievement, time frames for completion and the individuals involved. For example, if a client's goal is to develop a new way to deal with anger, the means of achievement might be attending the intensive anger management group, keeping a journal, and attending outside counseling. The primary focus of the plans is to achieve behavior goals. The ISP is reviewed monthly and the goals may be revised.

4. Addresses various client risk factors, which may contribute to the client's delinquent behavior, such as;

a. Substance Abuse

The JSRC conducts specialized substance abuse groups for clients with a demonstrated difficulty in controlling substance abuse. The specialized group meets twice a week. Approximately 1/3 of the clients are in this group. The JSRC also conducts a weekly psycho-educational substance abuse group for all clients.

In addition, the JSRC refers clients to outside counseling for more intensive substance abuse treatment. Approximately 10 percent of clients are referred to outside counseling for substance abuse, most frequently to Mt. Sinai Hospital and the Hispanic Health Council. The JSRC has letters of agreement with these entities regarding the acceptance of referrals. They do not usually run into any difficulties in securing slots for their clients.

b. Experiences of physical, emotional or sexual abuse

If clients have experienced sexual abuse, the JSRC refers them to the sexual assault crisis service. The service assesses the clients and refers them for counseling. The JSRC refers clients to Mt. Sinai if they are in need of counseling for emotional abuse.

c. Negative peer influences

The JSRC places clients into groups by risk based on research that higher risk kids are more likely to influence lower risk kids, rather than vice versa.

The program also believes that participating in positive pro-social activities is a key ingredient to deterring negative influences. The JSRC therefore tries to engage clients in sustainable recreation activities based on their interests, for example the fire explorers or a basketball league. They try to link the clients to activities they will continue to participate in after leaving the program. The JSRC also tries to engage the clients in opportunities through which they can interact with other kids, not just other juvenile delinquents, such as the Pope Park recreation leagues.

d. Learning disabilities or attention deficit issues

The JSRC works with the courts to try to get clients with learning disabilities or ADD proper assessments and appropriate medications. The JSRC staff also tries to spend more one-on-one time with kids with attention needs.

e. Mental health issues

The JSRC staff stated that they are not equipped to handle kids with intensive mental health issues, as they are not a clinical program. The Hartford probation department knows this and usually does not refer clients with serious mental health issues. However the program does have some clients in need of mental health counseling. The program refers these clients to outside agencies, as appropriate. The staff often have difficulty in securing slots at outside agencies due to a shortage of mental health services for adolescents in the community. They often refer clients to Mt. Sinai and Woodstock.

f. Acceptance of antisocial activity as norm/criminal thinking

Most of the JSRC clients score high in criminal thinking on the Youth Level of Service Case Management Inventory (YLSI) assessment. The JSRC uses a victim awareness program, in conjunction with Carl Robertson prison, to try to instill empathy in the clients. Through this program, prisoners talk about the impact of their crimes on the victims.

5. Provides services, which are designed to prevent escalation in criminal activity

According to the JSRC staff, research shows that the two biggest factors leading to delinquency are negative peer interactions and lack of productive leisure time. The JSRC tries to address these two issues by providing opportunities for the clients to interact with other kids outside of juvenile justice programs through team sports and group activities.

6. Involves the family in the client's rehabilitation program

The JSRC program conducts a weekly family group for families of residential and non-residential clients. Recently, the program began requiring parents of residential clients to sign a contract agreeing to meet with the client's case manager on a weekly basis, following family group meetings. Since the implementation of this requirement, the group attendance of parents of residential clients is about 80%. It is still a struggle to get the parents of non-residential clients to attend. The topics covered in the parent group meetings model those covered in client groups, such as cognitive self-change and parenting skills. The staff also incorporates a peer support component to the parent groups. In addition, the JSRC holds monthly pot-luck dinners that parents are encouraged to attend.

7. Involves community members, such as employers, relatives, teachers, clergy and community mentors in the client's programming to the greatest extent possible

If clients attend supplemental counseling off-site, the JSRC staff work with the counselors on the client's overall program experience. The JSRC clients also have mentors in the community through Community Solution's JUMP program. The mentors are thoroughly screened in this program. All JSRC clients are referred for matches with mentors upon intake into the program and most are matched successfully. The JSRC provides structured activities for the mentors and clients twice a month. In addition, mentors can take the clients on outings independently if the client is on the appropriate level. Some mentoring relationships continue after program exit

8. Promotes work ethic, social skills necessary to securing and maintaining a job, vocational training, and job placement assistance where age appropriate

The JSRC promotes work ethic values by making clients responsible for chores such as cleaning. In addition, clients are rewarded for good work in school. JRSC does not directly offer any specific vocational training but they use community service for vocational education. For example, the majority of clients participate in the Holcomb Farm project through which they learn how to plant fruits and vegetables, tend to the farm, harvest the farm, make a feast with the food and deliver it to senior centers.

The JSRC is planning to begin a group to teach the clients how to dress for and conduct job interviews and how to complete job applications. The JSRC makes referrals to the summer youth employment program and helps the kids complete paperwork for the program. They serve as a liaison to the program, monitoring the clients' progress. About one-third of the clients participate in summer youth employment.

9. Provides educational skills and competencies necessary for the juvenile offender to function effectively and positively in the community

Currently, the JSRC contracts with Capital Regional Education Council (CREC) a Board of Education contractor, to provide school to the clients on-site at the program. The clients are divided into two classes: special education and regular education, based on need. At the end of this school year, the JSRC is terminating its contract with CREC. Starting July 1, 2001, the JSRC clients will attend summer school through the Hartford Board of Education. In the fall of

2001, two teachers from the alternative education program of the Hartford Board of Education will provide education on-site to the JSRC clients.

The JSRC also provides a daily homework hour for all of the clients, including those who attend school off-site. The staff is available to assist with tutoring during this time. Clients attend school in their community, rather than at the JSRC, if it is determined that because of academic performance and good behavior they do not need to leave their local school or if they are ready for this re-integration step.

Life Skills:

The program teaches life skills through groups using the Skills Streaming Curriculum to promote positive social skills such as listening and understanding the needs of others. The program also uses the "Thinking for a Change" curriculum emphasizing cognitive restructuring and problem solving. In addition, the JSRC staff teaches clients basic life skills such as laundry, cleaning, personal hygiene and grooming.

10. Works with the school system to ensure offenders are appropriately enrolled and that their education needs are addressed

The JSRC participates in a pilot reintegration program for juveniles returning to school operated by the Hartford Board of Education. The Pilot Re-integration Education Program (PREP) is designed to facilitate the reintegration of adjudicated juveniles into Hartford schools upon leaving the JSRC. The kids' records are reviewed by PREP and they are assigned a case manager. Based on an evaluation of the juvenile's records and their needs, the case manager will link the juvenile to the appropriate educational placement, either in a traditional school environment, a special education program, or in an alternative school. The juvenile may spend one to two days at the PREP program before being referred to a permanent education placement or they may spend more time at PREP, if further assessment is needed.

To enroll a client in school, the JSRC staff sends records of the juvenile's academic performance while in the program and any other necessary information to PREP. Under PREP, the staff just has one entity with which they coordinate the school enrollment of all of their clients upon exit from the program. Prior to the implementation of PREP in January 2001, the JSRC staff indicated that they used to contact each individual school that a juvenile might attend to try to place the juvenile. PREP also serves the added purpose of helping the client to transition back into the public schools without their juvenile justice history openly indicated.

The JSRC staff indicated that they still encounter barriers around client school enrollment but that the barriers now primarily pertain to the timing of the enrollment. The clients are often ready to return to a community school or exit the JSRC at a mid-semester point. Re-integrating into school mid-semester poses challenges to the client and the school.

When JSRC clients are enrolled in schools outside of the program, the JSRC staff participate in PPT meetings and any other client testing sessions or meetings with teachers, as necessary.

11. Provides structured community service opportunities for the clients

The program mandates a minimum of 10 hours of community service/month, regardless of what the court requires. Most of the clients participate in service more than the 10 hours/month. The JSRC tries to provide service offerings, which are skill-based, focus on empathy development and are designed to help kids build linkages to the community. An example of an ongoing service project with which most of the JSRC clients are involved is the Holcomb Farm project, described above in section 8.

12. Ensures structured supervision in the community to prevent delinquent activity while the client is a program participant

When the clients are outside of the program either because of furloughs or after hours, the JSRC staff conducts home visits. The clients are also required to call into the program every 2 or 4 hours, depending on length of program experience. On outings the staff to client ratio is 1 to 5.

13. Recognizes and addresses the diversity of individual client needs within the program

The diverse needs of the program's clients are addressed through their individualized service plans. They are separated into group cohorts by risk level. They are also assigned to specialized groups based on individual needs. Further, they are divided into special education or regular education classes based on need.

14. Keeps abreast of and utilizes current research on effective intervention strategies for the juvenile delinquent population

Community Solutions Inc. (CSI), the JSRC's parent agency, mandates all full-time direct service employees to attend a minimum of 40 hours of training per year. The CSI operates an internal training academy offering various trainings throughout the year. CSI staff also utilize email to send each other information on current trends. In addition, the JSRC staff belong to several organizations, such as the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), through which they receive current research on intervention strategies.

An example of utilization of this research is the JSRC's decisions this past year to divide their client population into separate programs by gender and to divide clients into groups by risk level.

Probation Input:

The probation officers indicated that the above representation of the JSRC program accurately reflects their experiences with the program with one exception: according to the POs, the JSRC staff does not typically conduct home visits when the clients are on furloughs.

Some of the POs also expressed concern regarding the JSRC's definition of a successful discharge. As described above, the JSRC considers a client's transfer from the JSRC to a lower-risk program to be a successful discharge. The POs indicated that in many cases, clients are transferred out of the JSRC for non-compliance and despite the PO's recommendation that the client be sent to Long Lane, the judge may transfer the client to a lower-risk program, such as

NAFI. The officers felt that these clients should not be considered a success by the JSRC. However, the POs added that because JSRC tends to get the highest risk clients, they should not be held to the same standards for success rates as the other programs.

Several of the officers indicated that they have seen notable improvements in the JSRC's programming in recent months. One of the highlights of the JSRC program, according to the POs, is the range of services they provide on-site and their willingness to take referrals of clients for pieces of the programming. For example, one PO said that he has referred clients to the JSRC for just the drug treatment group or the anger management curriculum.

The POs also said that the JSRC does a good job linking of clients to jobs, mentors and outside services, such as YO Hartford and Planned Parenthood. A couple of the officers also spoke very favorably of the JSRC's strategy of using the withholding of client furloughs as an incentive to compel parents to attend the family group sessions.

Cliff House School, Meriden, Justice Resource Institute

Program Model:

The Cliff House School is a secure residential facility for juvenile sex offenders who are committed to the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Cliff House is a clinical program designed to prevent relapse of sex offending behaviors. Clients learn decision-making, problem-solving and anger management skills to control their sexually abusive behaviors. The program also emphasizes the development of empathy to reduce the potential of re-offending. The clients develop these skills through individual, family and group therapy and life skills groups. In addition, the clients are provided with education services and recreation activities.

Clients Served:

The Cliff House School is designed to serve adjudicated male sex offenders who are between the ages of 12 and 17, who have an IQ above 70 and who are committed to DCF as adjudicated delinquents.

The School has a licensed bed capacity for 10 juveniles and has submitted an application to be re-licensed at 15. The School currently is serving 13 juveniles with the permission of DCF.

Time Spent in the Program:

Clients spend an average of 18 months in the program. Some clients with longer DCF commitments may stay in the program up to 2 or 3 years. Staff report that the program's optimum length of stay is between 12 and 24 months depending on the client. They state that it often takes 12-18 months to have the client assume responsibility for their offenses and their impact on the victim/s. For more difficult clients, this can take up to 24 months.

Clients spend 24 hours/day, 7 days/week in the program. They have between 60 and 90 minutes of quiet time in their rooms each day. The clients cannot earn furloughs. As discharge approaches though, they spend some time returning to their home on a supervised basis.

Staffing:

The Cliff House School has a staff of approximately 28, including the program director, clinical director, residential director, assistant residential director, a full-time and a part-time clinician, shift supervisors, residential counselors distributed across 3 shifts, a cook, a part-time nurse, a maintenance person and an administrative assistant. In addition, the School contracts with ACES to provide two full-time teachers, which are funded by home school districts. The clinical director and full-time and part-time clinicians, provide ongoing clinical services to the clients with caseloads of approximately 3, 7, and 3 respectively.

Basic Finances:

The Cliff House School receives all of its funding from DCF, with the exception of the school district's payment for the education services. The program's FY 2001 budget is $1,332,852. This is the budget for 10 slots. The average daily cost of serving a client in the program is $365. The largest cost sources are payroll, fringe and subcontracted direct care.

Services:

Cliff House clients are in school on-site from 8:30 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.. After school, they participate in individual and group therapy, recreation and psycho-educational groups covering topics such as hygiene and anger management.

Each client is assigned a clinician who works with the client individually on a regular basis. Therapeutic assignments such as providing a history, an offense layout, and completing relapse prevention packets are designed to help the clients develop empathy and to understand and learn to control their offense cycles. The staff clinicians also provide family therapy to each client's family twice/month at Cliff House.

The clients can earn points for good behavior, such as waking-up on time, appropriate hygiene, following staff directions and doing homework. The points bring the clients to different levels, which determine the amount of allowance they receive and the amount of time they can spend in the community. Points also determine things like client bedtime, length of phone calls and use of the Nintendo system during recreation time. In addition, the facility houses a point store where clients can purchase items with points they have earned.

There is an exercise room on-site that the clients can use during recreation time. Other recreation activities include group sports, a model club to build cars, bingo, movie night, trading baseball cards, music group and an art group.

The clients are expected to complete daily chores pertaining to facility maintenance. They eat all three meals on-site family style.

Cliff House School, Meriden, Justice Resource Institute

1. Maximizes the reintegration of the juvenile offender into the community upon release from the program

The Cliff House uses phased-in supervised community time to assist clients with community reintegration. They also provide supervised home visits prior to discharge to help the clients prepare for reintegration into the home.

After Care:

The program recommends certain services a client should receive upon program discharge, such as outpatient therapy. These recommendations are discussed with the parole officers and are included in the discharge service plan. To facilitate client participation in these services, Cliff House tries to discharge clients before the end of their DCF commitment so that parole services has the authority to ensure clients comply with the recommended services. Cliff House does not conduct follow-up on client participation in after-care. According to the staff, the clients will typically participate in after-care when they are still on parole and then phase-out once their DCF commitment ends.

2. Is outcome-based and evaluates its success in achieving desired outcomes

The primary goals of the Cliff House program are for clients to develop empathy, complete a relapse prevention plan and fully disclose their offenses to the client group and to the victims and family if applicable. The program evaluates their success in these areas on a client-by-client basis but not in the aggregate. Staff acknowledge that development of empathy is hard to measure but they use completion of clarification letters to victims as a benchmark. In addition, the program uses the global assessment functioning (GAF) treatment plan as a pre and post evaluation of client progress. The results of the GAF are not aggregated across clients. The Cliff House reports incidents and census counts to DCF on a weekly basis. In addition, the program tracks complaints and grievances and critical incidents for reporting to Justice Resource Institute, their parent agency.

Definition of Successful vs. Unsuccessful Discharges:

The Cliff House considers a termination to be successful if a client terminates when planned and the program believes they are ready to terminate. Even if a client's discharge is planned, if the client has not completed the necessary work, such as the relapse prevention program, the Cliff House does not consider it a success. Clients sometimes reach the end of their DCF commitment period without successfully completing the program, yet they are discharged. The most common reasons for unsuccessful terminations are continued non-compliance with the program including assaultive or aggressive behavior.

3. Includes assessment methods at intake to determine the interventions most likely to change behaviors and norms of the individual clients

With each new client, the Cliff House usually receives a psychiatric and psychosexual evaluation from DCF. They then conduct a pre-placement interview with the child and their family. After admission, the program conducts a chemical assessment and a mental status assessment. Within the first thirty days, more client information is collected including individual, family, and offense histories. The program uses this information to develop a comprehensive service plan designed to help the client address their triggers and high-risk situations in order to prevent relapse.

The initial service plan covers the expectations for the first 30 days, which include program participation, complying with therapy and medical appointments. The comprehensive service plan, drawn up within the first 30 days, covers specific residential, clinical, educational and medical goals and discusses initial plans for discharge. An example of a clinical goal in a service plan would be to disclose offenses in a group session in the first quarter of participation. The service plans are reviewed quarterly as clients are re-assessed. The review might include new goals or continue the existing goals.

4. Addresses various client risk factors, which may contribute to the client's delinquent behavior, such as;

a. Substance Abuse

According to the staff, substance abuse is not a common problem with Cliff House clients. For those with an identified need general substance abuse prevention and counseling services are incorporated into individual counseling sessions. Cliff House does not typically refer clients to outside services for substance abuse treatment while they are in the program, however the staff would consider an outside referral, if necessary. Also, if a notable portion of incoming clients presented with substance abuse issues, the program would incorporate substance abuse counseling into the psycho-education group sessions.

b. Experiences of physical, emotional or sexual abuse

Most of the clients are victims of abuse. Addressing experiences of abuse is ingrained into all aspects of the Cliff House program. A variety of individual and group counseling strategies are implemented with the clients including holding survivors' group and family therapy sessions. If victimization is a precursor to a client's sex offending behavior it would also be incorporated into that client's relapse prevention strategies.

c. Negative peer influences

Dealing with negative peer influence is addressed routinely during group activities and therapy sessions. Topics such as the impacts of teasing and accepting personal responsibility are addressed on a regular basis.

d. Learning disabilities or attention deficit issues

The majority of Cliff House clients are well behind age appropriate educational levels. The program has customized the learning environment to accommodate those with IQs as low as 70. The program was developed with the understanding that learning disabilities can often be a precursor to sex offending behavior. A consulting psychiatrist also reviews client files on a monthly basis to assess client needs, manage medication maintenance and recommend any needed medications for clients with attention deficit disorders.

e. Mental health issues

A majority of Cliff House clients have been diagnosed with mental health disorders, ranging from conduct disorder to schizophrenia. The staff psychiatrist routinely monitors the clients and their medication maintenance. The clients' mental health needs are also addressed through intensive therapeutic programming and individual, family and group counseling sessions. Emphasis is placed on managing mental illness and the importance of medication. Specific therapeutic assignments revolve around the cycle of offense, relapse prevention and identifying triggers.

f. Acceptance of antisocial activity as norm/criminal thinking

The program conducts five sessions per week on why sex-offending behavior is inappropriate. The primary goal of treatment is to have the clients not commit the same offenses in the future. Other negative and antisocial behaviors engaged in by the boys are addressed through time outs and the loss of luxury items to teach them about consequences.

5. Provides services, which are designed to prevent escalation in criminal activity

To reduce the risk of recidivism, Cliff House focuses on the cycle of offense that the clients experience and how they can disrupt this cycle. The treatment is designed to help the clients identify their triggers and high-risk situations and to learn how to intervene to prevent the action from occurring. The clients work through relapse prevention packets and empathy development. The Cliff House School also uses psycho-education training on anger management and life skills sessions on boundaries and healthy sexuality as prevention strategies.

6. Involves the family in the client's rehabilitation program

Cliff House clinicians provide family therapy to each client's family twice a month at Cliff House. In addition, if there is a victim in the home who has received counseling, the Cliff House clinicians will provide reunification services to the offender and the victim in a therapeutic setting before the client is discharged. The Cliff House does not provide victim services but they will link the family to these services if needed.

If the family is resistant to the client's return home, if victims are located in the home and have not received adequate treatment, or if other family members are at risk, Cliff House works with Parole Services to identify an alternative living arrangement. Most of the clients do not go home. Instead they go to a group home or other community based setting.

7. Involves community members, such as employers, relatives, teachers, clergy and community mentors in the client's programming to the greatest extent possible

The Cliff House program does not formally work with outside community members to supplement the internal programming.

8. Promotes work ethic, social skills necessary to securing and maintaining a job, vocational training, and job placement assistance where age appropriate

The Cliff House uses daily chore responsibilities to promote a work ethic. In addition, the clients can earn money by doing extra chores. For example, they can do dishes for about $40/week. The clients learn vocational skills such as cooking and woodworking through the on-site school.

9. Provides educational skills and competencies necessary for the juvenile offender to function effectively and positively in the community

The clients attend school on-site from 8:30 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. every day. The ACES academic program is operated under a contract with the Board of Education. The clients are divided into two classes based on ability.

Life Skills:

The program offers a continuous psycho-educational group that meets weekly and covers a variety of issues necessary for effective functioning in the community. The psycho-education group rotates coverage of different topics for 12-16 week cycles throughout the year. The life skills cycle covers issues such as proper hygiene, how to do laundry, how to balance a checkbook and how to look for a job. The other psycho-educational groups offered include anger management, healthy sexuality, appropriate boundaries, and young men's issues.

10. Works with the school system to ensure offenders are appropriately enrolled and that their education needs are addressed

Cliff House is not directly involved in school enrollment after client discharge. As part of parole services, officers work with schools to ensure proper enrollment. In most instances, kids are transferred to another ACES program, which makes enrollment easier. Currently Cliff House's only role is to transfer school records to the new location.

11. Provides structured community service opportunities for the clients

The clients do not currently participate in community service. The program is exploring community service as a possibility in the future. However, the clients can't volunteer in the town of Meriden, where the school is located, due to the program's agreement with the town restricting client outings. The school is looking into service opportunities at nursing homes and animal shelters in neighboring towns.

12. Ensures structured supervision in the community to prevent delinquent activity while the client is a program participant

The Cliff House clients do not leave the program except under the supervision of program staff. The clients earn between 1 ½ and 3 hours/week of community time. During this time, clients can go to the mall or see a movie. The staff–to-client ratio is 1 to 3 during outings, and there are always at least 2 staff members on any outing. As clients approach discharge from the program, they can spend time in their home under staff-supervision. They also might spend one or two weekends without staff supervision in their home just prior to discharge.

13. Recognizes and addresses the diversity of individual client needs within the program

The clients do not all participate in the same services. For example, there is a survivor's group for victims that not everyone attends. The group work is also supplemented significantly by individual therapy. The program uses individual therapy to cover issues that are specific to the client's needs, such as substance abuse.

14. Keeps abreast of and utilizes current research on effective intervention strategies for the juvenile delinquent population

Program staff attend national conferences focusing on offender specific topics as well as non-offender topics, for example staff attended a healthy sexuality conference sponsored by Planned Parenthood. Clinical staff typically attend external training, which they relay to the program's line staff through internal training. The Cliff House also subscribes to a variety of periodicals and is involved in professional associations to stay abreast of current research in the field.

An example of the program utilizing current research is the use of a more holistic approach in treatment. The Cliff House program has been developing strategies to address all facets of each client in treatment, beyond just those that contribute to the offending behavior.

Parole Input:

The Parole Officers interviewed emphasized that the greatest strength of the Cliff House program is its clinical component. According to the POs, added benefits, not mentioned in the above-profile, include the program's in-state location and its small population size. With its small number of clients, a person in crisis can be seen by his clinician daily, if necessary. Proximity to parole services has also been extremely beneficial for the facilitation of routine parole services such as discharge planning and dealing with urgent client or program matters.

The parole officers did not agree with the above depiction of the role the program plays in the discharge process. While the program and parole staff jointly develop a discharge plan, the parole officers alone facilitate school enrollment, make referrals to community services and identify alternative living arrangements if the client does not go back home.

Concerns regarding the program expressed by the parole officers included the lack of recreation space on the grounds, inadequate training and high turnover of line staff. The officers indicated that the high turnover rates could be due to limited pools of appropriate staff and/or low pay rates that do not attract qualified personnel.

IV. Summary Comments – Probation and Parole

The following summary comments are based on focus groups conducted with probation and parole officers in May of 2001. Six Hartford probation officers were interviewed as a group; two New Haven probation officers were interviewed via telephone and 4 DCF parole officers were interviewed as a group. The probation officers were asked to review the draft inventory sections describing the 4 CSSD programs reviewed (the Hartford and Dixwell Gateway programs, the NAFI Outreach and Monitoring program and the JSRC program), while the parole officers were asked to review the draft sections describing the Cliff House and Choice programs.

The officers' comments on the specific programs have been added to the program profile sections of this document. Likewise, their comments on specific qualitative areas, such as reintegration, have been added to the synopsis sections. The purpose of the following section is to capture the comments of the officers on more systemic issues pertaining to the programs.

PROBATION OFFICERS' COMMENTS:

We asked the probation officers to identify strengths and weaknesses of the programs in meeting their needs and the needs of the courts. In response, the officers identified the following:

PROGRAM STRENGTHS:

- The programs **have improved the level and quality of their staffing**.
- The programs **occupy the kids' free time** after-school. As one PO stated, it is two less hours that the clients are out there possibly being delinquent.
- The responsibility of attending and/or calling into the programs also **teaches the clients a little bit of responsibility.**
- The programs **expose the clients to activities and opportunities** they would not see otherwise.
- The programs arrange **community service** hours for the clients. Some of the POs indicated that they often can't find sites for the kids because places don't want them on their own. The programs are able to arrange community service at appropriate places.
- The programs show the kids alternatives to delinquency and **positive role models** (male and female).
- The **parents benefit** from the programs, especially the NAFI program, which shows the parents how to monitor/track their kids and models parenting skills for them.
- The programs provide lessons in **life skills**, such as how to eat in a restaurant, personal hygiene and basic conduct in public.
- The programs **make the probation officers caseloads' manageable**. The POs stated that they could not provide the needed level of supervision and services without the programs.

- **The programs are very open** to taking the clients the probation officers refer to them, even when they may be inappropriate referrals, due to the unavailability of more appropriate placements.

PROGRAM SHORTCOMINGS:

- The shortcoming that the probation officers expressed the greatest frustration with is the level of **parent involvement**. As indicted above, in the synopsis section on parent involvement, the probation officers felt strongly that the courts need to hold the parents accountable in order for the programs to successfully work with the families. Without the courts requiring parent accountability, the programs and probation officers are constrained in their ability to address family issues.

- **Mixing clients with different risk levels in the same programs;** The probation officers felt that the current mixing of kids within the programs is detrimental. This concern is partially based on research that shows that higher risk kids influence lower-risk kids rather than vice versa. The POs also stated that the deterrent element of the programs is hindered when lower risk kids see higher risk kids receiving the same intervention. Several POs suggested that if the clients were separated even within the programs, into groups by risk level, as the JSRC does, the programs would be more successful.

- **More staff is needed at the programs.** The POs stated that despite improvements in staffing, the programs still experience high turnover rates, primarily due to low salaries, and a lack of overall staffing. According to the POs, the turnover rates makes it harder for both the kids and the probation officers to work with the programs.

- **Clinical staff is needed at the programs**. As indicated, in the synopsis section on mental health issues, the POs indicated that many clients have mental health needs, which the programs are not equipped to address. The programs and probation officers have difficulty finding enough community based slots to serve their clients' needs. Several POs felt strongly that the presence of a clinician at the programs is greatly needed, even on a shared basis.

V. Appendices

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

Appendix A

Substitute Senate Bill No. 569

Public Act No. 00-172

An Act Requiring The Evaluation Of The Costs And Benefits Of Programs Serving Juvenile Offenders.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

(NEW) (a) The Chief Court Administrator shall enter into an agreement with the Connecticut Policy and Economic Council to evaluate the costs and benefits of programs serving juvenile offenders, whether offered by private providers or state or municipal agencies, to determine the cost-effectiveness of such programs in reducing recidivism.

(b) For the purposes of subsection (a) of this section, there is established an advisory board to be composed of the Commissioner of Children and Families, the Commissioner of Correction and the Chief Court Administrator, or their designees, and the chairpersons and ranking members of the joint standing committees of the General Assembly on judiciary and human services.

(c) The evaluation shall identify the types of programs that are effective and not effective in reducing criminal offending in a cost-beneficial way. The evaluation shall use uniform data collection and a common methodological approach to compare programs serving juvenile offenders. The evaluation shall include, but not be limited to, a determination of the extent to which each program:

(1) Targets diverted and adjudicated juvenile offenders;

(2) Includes assessment methods to determine services, programs, and intervention strategies most likely to change behaviors and norms of juvenile offenders;

(3) Provides maximum structured supervision in the community using natural surveillance and community guardians such as employers, relatives, teachers, clergy and community mentors to the greatest extent possible;

(4) Promotes good work ethic values and educational skills and competencies necessary for the juvenile offender to function effectively and positively in the community;

(5) Maximizes the efficient delivery of treatment services aimed at reducing risk factors associated with the commission of juvenile offenses;

(6) Maximizes the reintegration of the juvenile offender into the community upon release from confinement;

(7) Maximizes the juvenile offender's opportunities to make full restitution to the victims and amends to the community;

(8) Supports and encourages increased court discretion in imposing community-based intervention strategies;

(9) Is compatible with research that shows which prevention and early intervention strategies work with juvenile offenders;

(10) Is outcome-based in that it describes what outcomes will be achieved or what outcomes have already been achieved;

(11) Includes an evaluation component; and

(12) Recognizes the diversity of local needs.

(d) Not later than January 1, 2001, the council shall submit a preliminary report on its activities to the joint standing committees of the General Assembly on judiciary and human services.

Approved June 1, 2000

REVISED LIST OF CRITERIA FOR PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

1. Maximizes the reintegration of the juvenile offender into the community upon release from the program;

2. Is outcome-based and evaluates its success in achieving desired outcomes;

3. Includes assessment methods at intake to determine interventions most likely to change behaviors and norms of the individual clients;

4. *Addresses various client risk factors, which may contribute to the client's delinquent behavior, such as;

    a. Substance abuse
    b. Experiences of physical, emotional or sexual abuse
    c. Negative peer influences
    d. Learning disabilities or attention deficit issues
    e. Mental health issues
    f. Acceptance of antisocial activity as norm/criminal thinking

5. Provides services which are designed to prevent escalation in criminal activity;

6. Involves the family in the client's rehabilitation program;

7. Involves community members, such as employers, teachers, clergy and community mentors in the client's programming to the greatest extent possible;

8. Promotes work ethic, social skills necessary to securing and maintaining a job, vocational training, and job placement assistance where age appropriate;

9. Provides educational skills and competencies necessary for the juvenile offender to function effectively and positively in the community;

10. *Works with the school system to ensure offenders are appropriately enrolled and that their education needs are addressed;

11. Provides structured community service opportunities for the clients;

12. Ensures structured supervision of the clients in the community to prevent delinquent activity while the client is a program participant;

13. Recognizes and addresses the diversity of individual client needs within the program;

14. *Keeps abreast of and utilizes current research on effective intervention strategies for the juvenile delinquent population;

*** New Criteria Added in Response to the Interest of the Advisory Board at March 20, 2001**

Appendix B

SUMMARY PROGRAM STATISTICS

	CRT	Dixwell	NAFI	Choice	JSRC	Cliff House
Number of Clients (as of February /March 2001)	21	10	39	40	28	13
Total Slots	38	10	39	40	24	10
Type of Clients	low to moderate risk	low to moderate risk - girls only	low to high risk	moderate to high risk	moderate to high risk	sex offenders - male only
Average Length of Stay	4 months	6 months	5 to 6 months	5 months	4-6 months	18 months
Hours of Participation/Week	6 - 7 hours	15 hours	1/2 - 5 hours	1 - 7.5 hours	42-168 hours	168 hours
Cost per client/day	$15	$14	$20	$12	$85	$365
FY 2001 Budget	$208,972	$51,000	$505,218 *	$411,392	$928,311	$1,332,852 **
Dedicated Staff Size	4	1	5	8.5	17	28
Case Management Staff-Client Ratio	1 to 7	1 to 10	1 to 10	1 to 7	1 to 10	1 to 7

* The NAFI O&T Budget includes funding for the New Britain program in addition to the Hartford program

** The Cliff House Budget is based on 10 clients rather than 13. The program added three clients in the latter part of FY 2001.

Appendix C – Critical Issues

Criteria	**CRT-Gateway**	**Dixwell**	**NAFI**	**Choice**	**JSRC**	**Cliff House**
Reintegration in to Community	Teach acceptable behavior in groups and in the community	Teach acceptable behavior in group and encourage continued Community Ctr. membership	Access to community resources. Phased-in self accountability	Access to community resources. Promote accountability at home	Skill development, gradual reintegration. Access to community	Phased-in supervised community time
Outcome and Evaluation	Client goals tracked while in program - not after. No aggregation of client success	Client goals tracked while in program – not after. No aggregation of client success	Client goals tracked while in program – not after. No aggregation of client success	Client goals while in program tracked - not after. Client progress while in program analyzed in aggregate	Client goals while in program tracked – not after Client progress while in program analyzed in aggregate	Client goals while in program tracked – not after No aggregation of client success
Assessment Methods	Uses Court Assessments	Use Court and Clinical Assessments	Uses Court Assessments	Uses Court and Residential Assessments	Multiple Assessment Tools	Clinical Assessment Tools
Risk Factor – *Substance Abuse*	Addressed in group education	Addressed in group education	Addressed in group education, during advocate time & referrals to outside agency	Addressed individually, in group education, & referrals to outside agencies	Prevention education group provided to all clients. Individual and group substance abuse counseling as needed	Substance abuse addressed in individual therapy if necessary
Risk Factor – *Experiences of abuse*	Referral to DCF Care-Line	Referral to individual counseling	Referrals to individual therapy & DCF Care-Line	Informal counseling by program & referral to individual therapy	Referrals to Sexual Assault Crisis Unit & individual therapy	Addressed by program in individual therapy
Risk Factor – *Negative Peer Influences*	Addressed in group education, individual client sessions	Team building exercises, planned weekend activities	Informal counseling, community monitoring	Informal counseling, community monitoring	Population separated by risk level, identify sustainable recreational activities	Empathy development, routinely incorporated in to group counseling
Risk Factor – *Learning Disabilities*	Tutoring and extra one-on-one time	Extra one-on-one time, life skills discussions about disabilities	Identify support network at school, monitor medication intake	Advocate for client at school "IEP" meetings	Students separated by ability, meds monitored	Educational programming developed for anyone above I.Q. of 70, meds monitored

Appendix C – Critical Issues

Criteria	**CRT-Gateway**	**Dixwell**	**NAFI**	**Choice**	**JSRC**	**Cliff House**
Risk Factor – *Mental Health Issues*	Not addressed by program	Referrals to outside agencies	Referrals to outside agencies	Referrals to outside agencies	Referrals to outside agencies	Issues addressed in group and individual counseling
Risk Factor – *Acceptance of criminal thinking*	Addressed in group and one-on-one sessions	Addressed through tours of Niantic, pen-pals with adult female offenders	Teach empathy and accepting personal responsibility, & "advocate time"	Develop trust with client, serve as role model & addressed during one-on-one time	Clients measured on YLSI, victim awareness, empathy development through adult prison	Group and individual therapy on why sex-offending is inappropriate
Escalation of criminal activity	Structured supervision. Life Skills	Link to positive community activities, structured supervision and life skills	Empathy development, life skills, accountability	Accountability. Pro-social activities.	Positive peer interactions, productive time	How to identify and disrupt offense cycles
Family Involvement	No structured involvement	Monthly visits attempted	Weekly contacts attempted	Weekly contacts attempted	Parents attend weekly meetings	Parents attend weekly meetings
Community Member Involvement	No structured involvement	Involved only with Community Center staff and members	Work with any significant person in client's life	Work with peers & extended family	Mentors assigned	No structured involvement
Work Ethic and Vocational Training	Job prep covered in groups. Training through community service	Job prep covered in groups. No vocational training	Job seeking groups offered. Training through community service	Job prep conducted one-on-one. Skills developed through Boat Builders and other S. End Community Ctr. Projects	Job prep group starting. Training primarily through community service	Culinary Arts and Woodworking taught on-site
Education Skills	Attendance is monitored monthly	Attendance monitored weekly, tutors recruited from local university	Routinely monitor student progress with personnel	Routinely monitor student progress with personnel	Provided on-site to most students. Others in regular school	Provided on-site to all students
Life Skills	Groups 2x/week. Anger mgt, checkbook balancing	Groups 4x/week. Topics include sexual responsibility, hygiene, assertiveness	Periodic groups. Topics covered one-on-one informally	Groups 2x/month. Anger mgt, hygiene	Weekly groups. Social Skills, personal hygiene	Weekly groups. Healthy sexuality, anger mgt

Appendix C – Critical Issues

Criteria	CRT-Gateway	Dixwell	NAFI	Choice	JSRC	Cliff House
School Enrollment	Generally not an issue. Assist parole with enrollment matters. Attend PPTs	Generally not an issue. If so, secure homebound tutoring or work with school board. Attend PPTs	Generally not a problem. Advocate for client, assist parents and probation, attend PPTs	Work with Hartford Alt. Ed., attend PPTs and IEPs. Advocate for client	Work with Hartford Alt. Ed., attend PPTs and IEPs. Advocate for client	Work in conjunction with Parole at discharge. Transfer records
Community Service	Community Service offered	Community Service required	Community Service required	Community Service offered	Community Service required	Letters to victims
Supervision in the Community	Clients must attend or call in daily	Clients must attend and call in daily	Clients tracked and must call-in	Clients tracked and must call-in	Clients on-site daily	Clients on-site daily
Diversity of client needs	Mostly group focused. Periodic one-on-one meetings	Communal programming supplemented with 1:1 individual support	Regular individual tracking visits	Regular individual tracking visits	Specialized groups and individual mtgs	Routine one-on-one mtgs with clinicians
Training / Use of Current Research	Routine staff training	No staff training	Routine staff training	Routine staff training	Routine staff training	Routine staff training